■ ENTERTAINMENT/A2-1

How to seat 1,000 guests, including Hollywood A-listers, at the Globes

■ ACROSS/A15

Cebu journalist's killer convicted, sentenced to death

■ NEWS/A2

GMA promises P13-B pay hike for gov't employees

■ METRO/A17

Greenhills shopping center illegally extracting water from aquifer, says NWRB

Fil-Am spy, ex-Ping aide: Patriots or conspirators?

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY—AN EX-AIDE OF SEN. Panfilo Lacson, a former police officer who is accused of wanting to overthrow the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, is "a Filipino patriot" guilty only of voicing a political opinion, according to his lawyer.

"There was no conspiracy," Mark Berman, lawyer of former Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, said in an interview on Wednesday after

FIL-AM SPY/ A4

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, January 20, 2006 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 43 P18 website: www.inq7.net

'Brokeback' breaks taboo for gay cowboys on the range

BONGGA KA DAY!

CHANDLER, ARIZONA—Many gay cowboys are grateful that award-winning "Brokeback Mountain" has broken a sexual taboo, though not all are hiding away in the American West.

About 100 gay cowboys

BROKEBACK/ A8

JESS YUSON

THE BIG STAR at the hearing turns out to be the comely Marietta Santos. Other resource persons, from left are Michael Angelo Zuce, Commodore Rex Robles (ret.), ex-Sen. Honasan and ex-Nica chief Gen. Canieso (ret.).

Senate probe reveals massive Isafp wiretapping of GMA foes

By TJ Burgonio

THE VOICES ON THE TAPES were hardly recognizable and the conversations uninteresting.

But when played at the Senate yesterday, the two tapes, dubbed "children" of the widely popular "Hello Garci tape," revealed the extensive wiretapping of opposition personalities shortly before the May 2004 election. And the fingerprints of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) were written all over it.

Some of the voices caught in the recordings were those of retired Navy Commodore Rex Robles, Mrs. Mira Dumlao, secretary of former Sen. Gregorio Honasan, retired Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Canieso, a supporter of opposition presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson; and Michael Angelo Zuce, a former Malacanang operative.

They appeared at the resumption of a Senate inquiry into the wiretapping to listen to the tapes and identify their voices.

Honasan was identified with Fernando Poe Jr., another candidate in the May 2004 presidential election.

The wiretaps were carried out from January to June 2004 during the presidential election period.

Robles said his voice was taped when he tried to call Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile but had mistakenly dialed Honasan's number. Robles and Honasan were with Enrile's staff when the last was defense minister during the Marcos presidency.

The damning testimony, however, came from Marietta Santos, who named the annotators on the recordings as Isafp agents who included her boyfriend, TSgt. Vidal Doble.

Santos was quick to identify most of those who annotated the conver-

SENATE/ A4

Escape part of bigger plot

Clandestine group claims 7 officers helped Magdalo 4 flee

By Dona Pazzibugan and Luige A. del Puerto

THE "MAGDALO 4" had outside help and their escape appeared increasingly to be part of a bigger plot to finally accomplish what they failed to do at Oakwood in 2003.

A clandestine group in the military, the Young Officers Union new generation (YOUng), said it facilitated the escape of Capt. Nathaniel Rabonza and 1st Lieutenants Lawrence San Juan, Sonny Sarmiento and Patricio Bumidang from Port Bonifacio on Tuesday night.

YOUng said seven junior officers—two from the Air Force, two from the Navy and three from the Army—helped the four leave their cells at 8:42 p.m. and flee in four vehicles.

"They were out of the camp by 9 p.m.," the time the Army said it discovered the four were missing, said the YOUng statement signed by a Lt. Col. Arsenio Alcantara,

ESCAPE/ A6

A puzzle: Intel head lets Trillanes talk on GMA ouster

By Dona Pazzibugan and Tarra V. Quismundo

IF THE CHIEF OF THE MILItary's intelligence unit was around while a prominent rebel officer called for President Macapagal-Arroyo's ouster, how long could the military remain neutral?

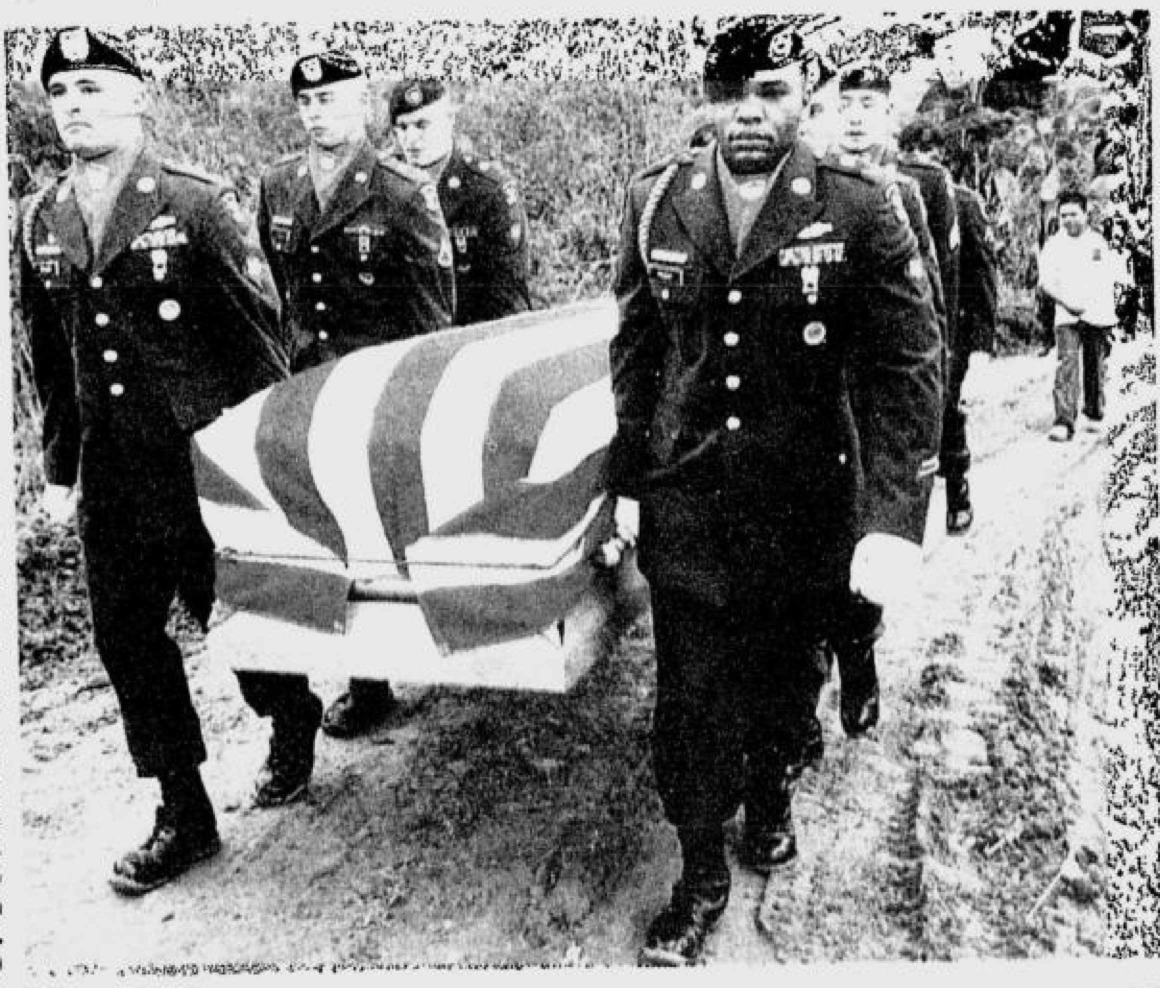
Brig. Gen. Marlu Quevedo, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), was nearby when Magdalo Group leader Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV, met with the media after a hearing at the Makati Regional Trial Court on Tuesday.

Most reporters and certainly all the onlookers who were listening as Trillanes was giving an interview would not have recognized Quevedo, who has a talent for being inconspicuous in a crowd.

But a couple of reporters did recognize him and saw him just outside the Makati RTC building as Trillanes and other mutineers and

A PUZZLE/ A6

In Loving Memory of
SGT Maravillosa, Myla Lumayag
C CO, 301st MI BN
U.S. Army Reserve



REUTERS

OVER HILL AND DALE in the remote mud-packed villlage of U-og in Inabanga, Bohol, US honor guards carry the coffin of Army Sgt. Maravillosa to her final resting place. The US contingent was led by Brig. Gen. Gregory Schumacher who awarded 3 military medals to the Fil-American soldier. Town mates (above) of the hero swell with affection and pride. *(Story on Page A16.)*

Morales says he's too good for Pacquiao

By Recah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—ERIK MORALES, future Hall of Fame inductee, apologized to the Filipino people yesterday.'

Sorry, he said, but there's nothing he could do about it. He's coming in twice as sharp and prepared as he was last year.

In short, he will be just too good for Manny Pacquiao.

"The jab will be there, no matter what they say they would do, only it would be twice as quick," Morales, bright-eyed, ruddy of cheek, explained through an interpreter at the tailend of yesterday's press preview for his Jan. 21 rematch against Manny Pacquiao of the Philippines.

Unlike last year, when he met the foreign media wearing a thick jacket, looking weak and frail, Morales showed up in a plain woolen sweatshirt appearing

MORALES/ A8

IN THIS CORNER: At the press conference in Las Vegas, Manny Pacquiao and Eric Morales of Mexico are all smiles.

AP

Congress oversight body calls for end to VFA in 6 months

By Philip C. Tubeza and Volt Contreras

THE LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT committee on the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement (Lovfa) yesterday passed a concurrent resolution calling for the termination and renegotiation of the controversial treaty.

It also called for a stop to joint military exercises for the duration of the trial of the four US Marines charged with raping a Filipino woman on Nov. 1, 2005.

"The committee has just voted in favor of the resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a notice of termination shall be served upon the US Embassy in order that, during the intervening six-month period provided for by the VFA, the Philippine and American governments can renegotiate a new [treaty] where the question of custody hopefully will no longer be problematic," said Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who cochairs the Lovfa with Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco.

CONGRESS/ A8

Never again, says girl holding Bible at GMA's oath-taking

By Fe Zamora

WHO WAS THAT LITTLE GIRL?

No, not Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, then Vice President who was taking her oath as President at the Edsa Shrine exactly five years ago today, but that girl who was holding the Bible.

Cecilia Paz Razon Abad had earned herself a place in history.

Then 11 years old, she was the young girl flanked by Ms Arroyo and Chief Justice Hilario Davide, who administered the oath of office during the hastily prepared ceremony. *(See photo on Page A6.)*

But the youngest daughter of resigned Education Secretary

NEVER/ A6

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol, Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. There will be frequent thunderstorms over Eastern Mindanao. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies. SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/01/20/06

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

GMA vows ₱13B for gov't pay raise

WITH THE belfry of the Quiapo Church in the background, President Arroyo stresses a point in her speech before the Liberal Party at the Plaza Miranda. LYN RILLON

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO YESTERDAY promised to get Congress to approve a P13 billion wage hike package for government employees, including military personnel, before Valentine's Day amid growing dissatisfaction with her administration and renewed restiveness among the junior officers of the Armed Forces.

Speaking at the 60th anniversary celebrations of the Liberal Party at Plaza Miranda yesterday, the President said the generous compensation package for government employees was part of her efforts to bring the benefits of her economic reform program to the masses.

Budget Secretary Romulo Neri said a P13 billion compensation package was already included in the 2006 budget that has yet to be approved by Congress.

He explained that the President was referring to a new bill that has been filed to ensure that the compensation package would be implemented in case there would be a delay in the approval of the 2006 budget.

The compensation package is to be funded by the revenues expected from the new tax reforms, like the anticipated increase in the value-added tax rate from 10 percent to 12 percent next month.

Neri said the government has allocated P13 billion in the 2006 budget to boost the incomes of more than one million government employees, including over 100,000 soldiers, by 8 percent, or a minimum of P500 each.

Government employee groups have criticized the proposed wage hike as insubstantial, pointing out that they have been demanding salary increases for the past four years.

The President also promised that "more benefits were coming to give all Filipino families a chance to increase their standard of living."

"I hope that on the day of hearts, government employees will be happy with the benefits offered by the government," Ms Arroyo said. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. with a report from Christine Avendaño*

Noli still tops in new SWS poll

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

DE CASTRO

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO AND Senate President Franklin Drilon, the officials next in line to the presidency, garnered the highest ratings in the latest survey on public satisfaction with government officials taken amid continuing calls for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign.

The Social Weather Stations survey conducted between Nov. 27 and Dec. 4, 2005, showed De Castro received a net satisfaction rating of 34 percent (58 percent satisfied less 24 percent dissatisfied) in the nationwide poll that covered 1,200 respondents.

Though slightly lower than the 39 percent net satisfaction rating he received last August, De Castro remained the most esteemed official in the highest echelons of government.

De Castro's rating was in stark contrast to President Arroyo's numbers, however.

Ms Arroyo had a net satisfaction rating of minus 30 percent for the same period (24 percent satisfied less 54 percent dissatisfied).

Next tenant?

On the other hand, Drilon, who could be the next tenant of Malacañang should both the President and De Castro heed opposition calls to step down, had a net satisfaction rating of 24 percent (49 percent satisfied less 25 percent dissatisfied).

Respondents gave Drilon high marks even though his leading of a splinter group in the Liberal Party that called for Ms Arroyo to resign has not borne results.

Speaker Jose de Venecia was neither here nor there. He received a zero net satisfaction rating (37 percent satisfied and 37 percent dissatisfied) as his positions on issues and controversies appeared to have an equal share of supporters and detractors.

Both the House and Senate saw their net satisfaction ratings dip although they remained in the positive column. The Senate had a net satisfaction rating of 14 percent (down from 20 percent in September), while the House had a rating of 7 percent (down from 12 percent). Both chambers were mired in political battles over Ms Arroyo's continued stay in office during the last six months of 2005.

Warm sendoff

The respondents, however, gave a warm sendoff to recently retired Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. who notched an 11-percent net satisfaction rating (42 percent satisfied less 31 percent dissatisfied). The Davide-led Supreme Court chalked up the highest marks among key government institutions with a net satisfaction rating of 12 percent.

Dislike for President Arroyo boiled over to the executive branch with her administration getting a net satisfaction rating of minus 15 percent, down further from the 11 percent in September, and her Cabinet holding steady with a net satisfaction rating of minus 6 percent, the same as in September.

The SWS conducted face-to-face interviews of 1,200 adults comprising random samples of 300 each in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao.

In a press statement, De Castro expressed his gratitude to the people for the high satisfaction rating.

"I value very much the trust reposed in me by the Filipino people and I assure them that I would always aim to protect their rights and work hard to be continuously deserving of the people's confidence," he said.

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It's Comelec's turn to cry 'dagdag-bawas'

By Jerome Aning

NOW IT'S THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS' turn to accuse its critics of "dagdag-bawas," or vote-padding and vote-shaving.

Comelec yesterday questioned the genuineness of the signatures in the on-line petition calling for the resignation of top elections officials involved in the P1.3-billion computerization deal that the Supreme Court nullified in 2004 due to bidding irregularities.

The petition, posted last July 27 by Augusto Lagman, former president of the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines, has already gathered about 900 signatures.

Lagman belongs to the Philippines Coalition Against Corruption and the Black and White Movement, which have been demanding the resignation and prosecution of Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and Commissioners Resurreccion Borra, Mehol Sadain, Rufino Javier and Florentino Tuason Jr.

"A close look at the mechanics of the petition [posted by Lagman] tells a different story," Comelec said in a statement, claiming that many of the signatures were duplicates and that some of those who had signed actually disapproved of the petition.

For anyone to "sign" the petition (http://www.petitiononline.com/resignow/petition.html), he or she just needs to fill a form indicating his or her name and e-mail address, which are required, and comments, address and organization, which are optional.

The signer has the option of keeping his e-mail address private, disclosed to the public or disclosed only to the petition author.

Comelec said the name requirement was meaningless since the petition did not distinguish between real and fictional names, including the names of cartoon characters which gave the petition a "cartoonish nature."

"In fact, with enough time and imagination, a person can have as many different e-mail addresses as he wants, and therefore can 'sign' the petition more than once," Comelec added. "And since the petition is on-line and available to anyone worldwide, and there is no way to verify the signatory's nationality, a person can pretend to be Filipino, or even more crassly, pretend to be an overseas Filipino worker."

Comelec pointed out that the petition could not even distinguish between signatories that were for or against it.

Court clears Caltex in '87 sea tragedy

By Armand N. Nocum

THE COURT OF APPEALS has absolved Caltex Phil. of any liability for the 1987 MV Doña Paz sea tragedy, the world's worst peacetime marine disaster.

The appellate court upheld a 1997 Makati court ruling that dismissed claims against the oil company by Sulpicio Lines, the operators of the Doña Paz.

The Doña Paz was headed for Tacloban City when it was rammed in the dark by the Vector, a small oil tanker hired by Caltex. The vessel sank with the loss of about 4,000 lives off the coast of Mindoro a few days before Christmas on Dec. 20, 1987.

In a 13-page decision penned by Associate Justice Rodrigo Cosico, the appellate court said Caltex was not liable for the "negligence" of the captain of the Vector.

Caltex was thus excluded from the responsibility of compensating the victims' heirs and of payment for lost cargo being sought by Sulpicio Lines and its insurer, Prudential Guarantee Insurance, from the Vector Shipping Corp., the Vector's owners.

Cosico wrote that it was settled in Philippine jurisprudence that the charterer of a ship only has "the right to indicate the ports or places at which the vessel shall call or enter but ... has no jurisdiction or control over the acts of the captain."

The charterer was "not liable for damages by the negligence of the latter in handling the ship," the judge added.

With a report from AFP

Junking of impeach rap final

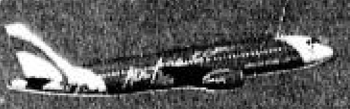
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' decision to scrap the revived impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo was "final," House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles declared yesterday.

"It's fatally defective. We can't do anything about it," said Nograles, referring to the complaint refiled by lawyer Oliver Lozano.

Lozano "can always question the House action anywhere he likes but that's our stand," Nograles added. "His impeachment complaint is returned as a scrap of paper."

Like Nograles, Speaker Jose de Venecia said Lozano's hasty filing violated the constitutional ban on the filing of more than one impeachment complaint against the same official within a year. The ban on the filing of a new complaint against Ms Arroyo expires in July. *Michael Lim Ubac*

Air Asia



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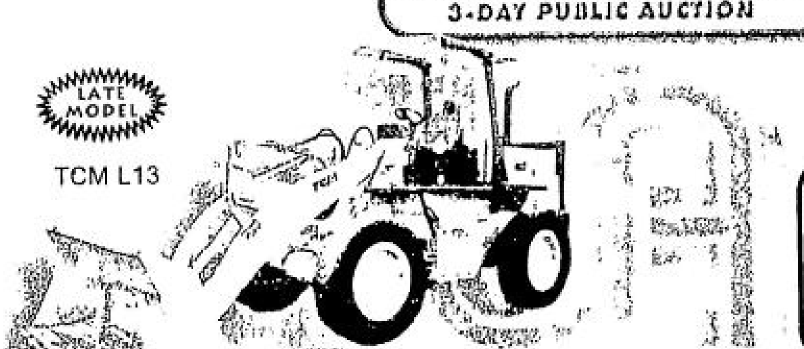

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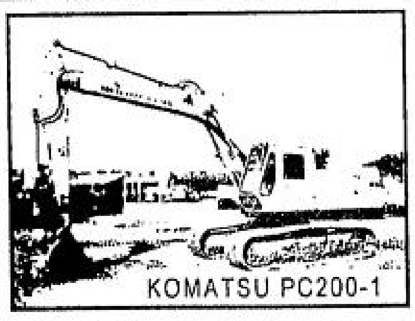

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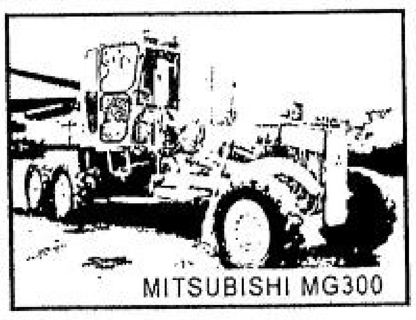

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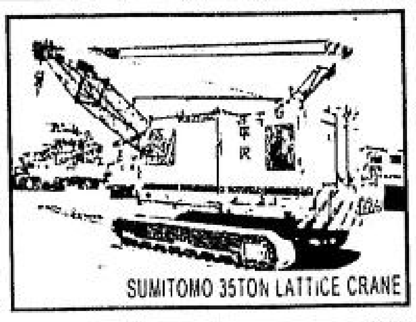

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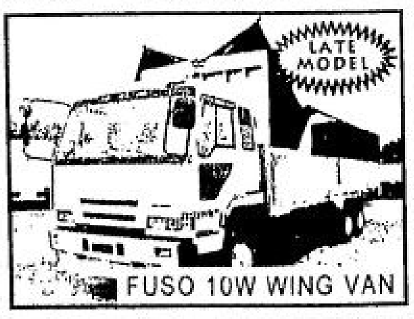

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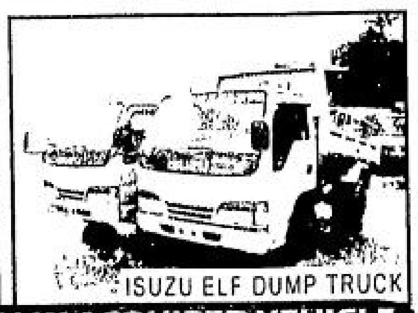

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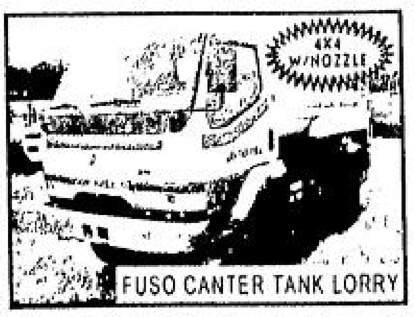

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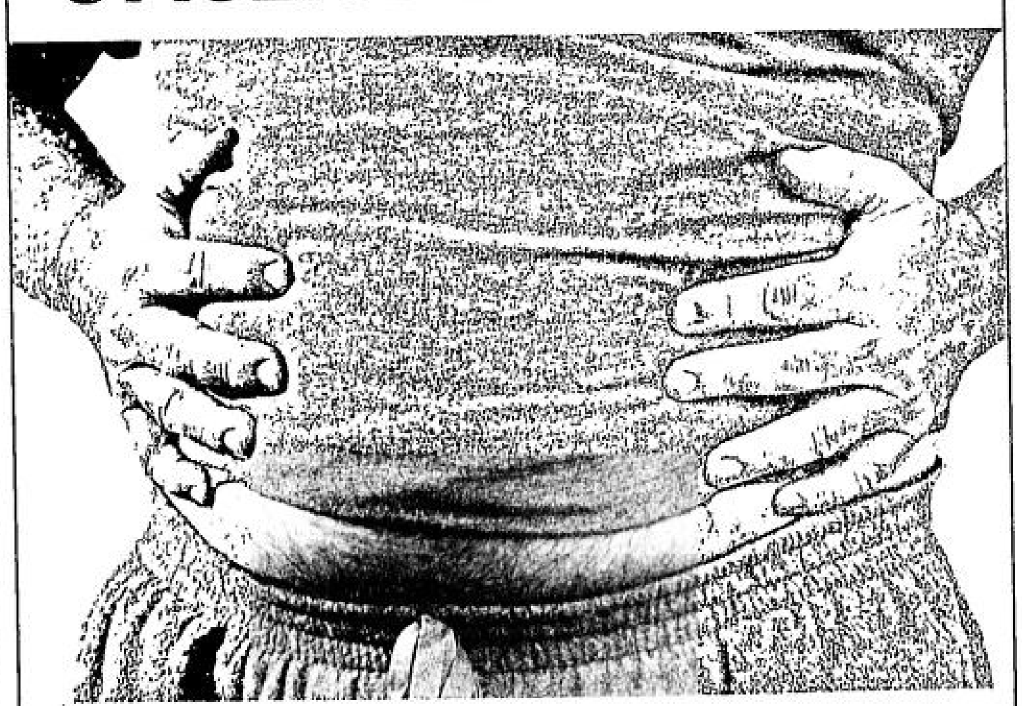

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Doble's girl claims seeing wiretapping gear at Isafp 'blue room'

By TJ Burgonio

BY NOW, THE INTELLIGENCE Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) must have realized it committed a terrible mistake in June 2004 when it allowed a civilian to freely roam its premises—one of the most restricted areas in the country.

The girlfriend of Isafp T/Sgt. Vidal Doble yesterday testified at the Senate that she saw a mobile phone interceptor during one of her forays into the "blue room" at the agency's Mig 21 compound.

Marietta Santos' testimony at the Senate inquiry into the "Hello Garci" tape scandal contradicted the Isafp's consistent declaration that it had no capability to conducting wiretaps.

"I'm positive I've seen such an equipment," she said wryly when she was shown a brochure of a Cellular Interceptor-GSM Digital unit and asked by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile if she had seen one at Isafp.

"I'd always manage to escape from my escorts and get in. I was the persistent type," she chuckled when asked how sure she was about it.

The 25-year-old Santos had sauntered in and out of the Isafp compound and had managed to get inside the Mig 21 blue room at least twice where she glimpsed the wiretapping equipment that the agents used.

She made her forays into the room while Doble was the duty officer and during their month-long stay at the Isafp compound after the wiretapping scandal broke out.

Enrile said the cellular interceptor estimated to cost $420,000, was available to government agencies only.

Retired Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Canieso, former chief of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency who appeared as a witness, doubted if an agent, Mig 21 or the Isafp had the means to purchase such "expensive equipment."

When asked if the Armed Forces had the money to buy a unit, he said: "Yes." He said it was possible the government could have procured the interceptor, stressing that it needed the cooperation of service providers to operate it.

"The equipment to enable interception of cellular calls will require what is called a permit to purchase and you have been secretary of defense. I think that you know ..." he said, addressing Enrile.

Senate probe reveals massive Isafp wiretapping of GMA foes

From page A1

sations in the two tapes, saying they were members of the Isafp Military Intelligence Group 21.

She identified them as T/Sgt. Ed Cando, a certain Kuya Ben, one M/Sgt. Belledo, T/Sgt. Allan Bisulo, and the rest by their code names, 212, 213, 214 and 215, and Vidal, her boyfriend, among others.

She managed to say that 212 was the code of a certain Sagie, and 213, a Rebong.

"I've been with him for a long time," she said when asked how sure she was that it was Doble who had annotated a certain conversation.

She recognize the voices of the rest because she had talked to them in person or by phone, recalling that it was they who usually picked up the phone whenever she called Doble at Isafp.

She readily produced four photos taken during an outing with some Isafp agents. She identified each one in the photos, including Doble, T/Sgt. Belledo, T/Sgt. Dave, T/Sgt. Abando, Sgt. Velasco and one Pitatot.

In December last year, Santos testified at the Senate that she freely roamed in and out of the Isafp blue room in June 2004 where a 14-man team of the agency's Mig 21 allegedly conducted the wiretapping.

"The direction is pointing to that," Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the investigating committee on national defense, told reporters when asked if it could be concluded from Santos' testimony that it was Isafp which had carried out the wiretapping.

The two tapes were submitted by lawyer Samuel Ong, who surfaced last June claiming that he had the master copy of the wiretaps. He could not attend the inquiry because he faces arrest on charges of kidnapping and illegal detention, said Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the committee conducting the inquiry.

A former deputy director of the National Bureau of Investigation, Ong had earlier said that he had bought the tapes from Doble for P2 million.

Isafp has deteriorated

The recordings included conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano allegedly showing that she rigged the 2004 balloting—a charge she has vehemently denied. Disclosures in Hello Garci tapes led to an impeachment attempt against Ms Arroyo, which her allies in the House killed in September.

Robles, Enrile and Honasan shared the view that the military, mandated to be apolitical, had engaged in partisan politics.

"As we listen to the tapes or the recordings, the more I feel that we have an intelligence agency that has deteriorated probably beyond repair," Robles said.

"And my heart beats for it because I had been with the Isafp for some time, and we had instituted procedures (for wiretapping), which have been lost."

Honasan agreed with Robles. "I would like to raise the alarm about something that is developing ... the deterioration of a very sensitive agency of government," he said.

"It is grossly unfair—in fact, I think it is criminal—for civilian authority or politicians to inflict this on an institution that is mandated to be apolitical ... Soldiers are not praetorian guards of any individual or group," he said.

Disastrous and tragic

"The armed forces is the only legalized armed group and for it to take sides is disastrous and tragic for our democracy," Honasan said.

Enrile was more critical.

"If this was an election, it's very obvious that the military organization, through its intelligence operation, is already a participant in the political game of the country. That's the worst part of this whole thing. It has lost its apolitical character," he said

"They don't deserve the accolade of being called intelligence officers; they are eavesdroppers. Nothing more, nothing less. Voyeurs."

The senator later moved that the Armed Forces chief and the Isafp chief who were serving at the time the wiretapping was carried out be identified and summoned "to pinpoint responsibility." This was unanimously approved by the committee.

Excerpts of Honasan phone tap

Some excerpts of the conversations of one tape went:

Voice 1: Hello, good afternoon.

Voice 2: Yes, sir.

V1: *Si* Commodore Robles *ito, iyong tungkol sa* party. *Puwede bang matanong*?

V2: Yes sir.

V1: *Kay* Senator Enrile

V2: *Opo*

V1: *Sino ito?*

V2: Sir, *nakisuyo lang ako kay* Nora

V1: *Wala siya diyan?*

V2: *Wala ho. Sa* office *po ito ni* Senator Honasan.

V1: *Saan ba itong* office *na ito?* Office *ni* Senator Honasan?

V2: *Opo*

Robles, looking smart in a business suit, admitted that the first voice was his and explained that he was actually trying to reach Enrile's office to set a meeting, but got the wrong number.

"It is my voice. I remember the conversation clearly. From the context, it's very clear. It's my first and only time to call Senator Honasan's office. I didn't even know that it was his office. I thought it was the number of Senator Enrile whom I wanted to contact at the time," he said.

Dumlao also admitted that the other voice was hers.

Their conversation was recorded at 4:55 p.m. on Feb. 15, 2004.

Dumlao confirmed her voice in several other conversations tapped from January to February 2004, but clarified that it was not her voice in the other conversations. She could not recall all the people she had talked to, except for Robles.

Canieso and son

The second tape was also played. Here are some excerpts:

V1: Hello.

V2: Bong

V1: O

V2: *Kausapin ka ni* Daddy.

V1: *May* text *na rin ba diyan sa iyo si* Bonifacio?

V2: *Oo.*

V1: *Mayroon?*

V2: *Oo.*

The conversation was recorded at 7:34 a.m. on May 8, 2004.

Former chief of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency retired General Canieso confirmed that one voice was his and the other was that of his son, Ali Ben Rajah Canieso, who failed to attend the hearing due to a prior commitment.

The elder Canieso explained that he worked for Soldiers for Peace and Progress, an organization formed by retired military volunteers to protect Lacson's vote, while his son worked on the communication side. Most of the time, the son carried the retired general's mobile phone.

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Fil-Am spy…

From page A1

US District Judge William H. Walls denied a request to let Aquino go free on bail until his trial, which is still months away.

"What you have is an individual who would be considered part of the opposition to the government. But it's a long stretch between expressing political views and knowingly passing classified information, which is what Mr. Aquino is charged with," Berman said, adding:

"Aquino is a Filipino patriot who is opposed to the current administration. In America, it's not a crime to be in the opposition."

Aquino, 39, fled to the United States after being implicated in the murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito, in 2000.

He was arrested in September along with Leandro Aragoncillo, a Philippine-born intelligence analyst of the Federal Bureau of Investigation who used to work in the White House.

'Conspirators'

The US Attorney's Office in Newark contends that Aquino and Aragoncillo conspired to overthrow the Arroyo administration.

"The evidence will show that Aragoncillo, Aquino ... and others possessed a powerful motive to enter and participate in the criminal conspiracy referenced in the indictment: the destabilization and removal of the current government of the Republic of the Philippines," Assistant US Attorney Karl Buch wrote in documents filed late Tuesday.

Both men are charged with conspiracy and acting as unregistered foreign agents.

Aragoncillo, 47, is also accused of misusing an FBI computer. He has been negotiating a plea deal, according to court documents.

Prosecutors say Aragoncillo stole sensitive classified documents and gave them to Aquino, who then passed them along to current or former Philippine officials.

Ousted President Joseph Estrada, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Lacson have acknowledged receiving e-mail from Aragoncillo or Aquino.

'Flight risk'

Judge Walls ruled that Aquino was a serious flight risk, noting that he faced deportation for overstaying a tourist visa and prosecution in the Philippines for the Dacer-Corbito murders.

Prosecutors had claimed that Aquino "actively investigated the activities of [Ms Arroyo] and other public officials in the Philippines," and either obtained or tried to obtain sensitive personal and financial information about them.

For example, prosecutors said, Aquino obtained toll records for a telephone in the President's office in Malacañang.

Berman has acknowledged that Aquino received documents from Aragoncillo, but said none were marked confidential.

Aquino has an extensive intelligence and security background, according to court documents. In the Philippines, he served as chief of operations for the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force from July 1998 to January 2001, and even took a course on crisis management at FBI headquarters in Quantico, Virginia, in August 2000.

'Persecution'

Berman said Aquino left his homeland in June 2001 because "there was a change in the leadership of the Philippines, and he was being persecuted."

Asked after the hearing to elaborate, Berman said Aquino had feared for his safety.

"The rough and tumble of Philippine politics is a lot rougher than what we experience here in the US," Berman said. "He definitely felt at risk remaining in the Philippines."

Because of that, Berman said, Aquino came to the United States to enroll in nursing school and start a new life in New York City's Queens borough.

"What type of spy comes to the US and goes to nursing school?" Berman said.

'Not in bad faith'

In Manila, Estrada yesterday downplayed the value of the classified information that he and other opposition leaders had received.

Estrada, who acknowledged receiving information from Aragoncillo, said most of the material amounted to little more than news summaries and assessments of politicians.

"I don't believe the guy sent those materials in bad faith," Estrada told The Associated Press by phone. "What's spying there when there was nothing new in the downloaded materials? Everybody knew the contents. ... I read them in newspapers."

Estrada said he did not think that Aragoncillo passed on classified information for money, but because he was "overly concerned about his relatives and fellow Filipinos."

"Even if he was already at the FBI and a naturalized American, he still has a Filipino heart," Estrada said. *AP*

NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

2 top bishops ask Filipinos not to despair

By Christian V. Esguerra

TWO LEADING LIGHTS OF THE Roman Catholic church in the Philippines appealed to Filipinos yesterday to keep faith in their country despite the seemingly endless economic and political crises that have overtaken it.

"There is no reason to despair for our country," Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), said in a message marking the observance of National Bible Week titled "There is Hope for Our Country."

LAGDAMEO

ROSALES

Lagdameo's optimism was based on his observation that good people continued to outnumber the bad ones. The prelate, who also heads the archdiocese of Jaro, identified these good people as those who "follow the Word of God, made flesh in Jesus Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Just as optimistic was Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, who believes the country could overcome the challenges it faces given the proper attitude toward the scriptures.

"May His Word be 'the lamp to our feet and a light to our path' as we journey toward national healing and renewal," he said in a separate message.

National transformation, starting from individual conversion, is the direction being taken by Lagdameo, more than a month after he assumed leadership of the country's bishops, now numbering 122.

The prelate underscored this priority in last month's National Prayer Breakfast when he urged leaders in both the government and private sectors to be accountable for their actions.

In a strongly worded speech delivered in the presence of President Macapagal-Arroyo, he said an accountable leader is one who "does not sweep the truth under the carpet."

In a separate National Bible Week message, Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes said "Filipinos have become unworthy of our dignity as Christians because of our many failures as a nation."

"Indeed, we are a nation that urgently needs healing, renewal and transformation," said Bastes, who heads the CBCP's Episcopal Commission on the Biblical Apostolate.

In a press conference launching the National Bible Week, Fr. Gerardo Tapiador, the commission's director for Metro Manila, zeroed in on the importance of going to the scriptures to survive today's travails.

Describing the Bible as the only source of truth, he warned Filipinos against being fed false information or outright lies. "You will be misled," he told reporters.

Critics have also scored the Catholic hierarchy for allegedly not doing enough to enlighten its flock amid the lies and cover-ups purportedly being peddled by some people in government.

The CBCP is scheduled to hold its first plenary assembly for the year and the first under Lagdameo on Jan. 28 to 30.

Caloocan Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez, head of the CBCP's Episcopal Commission on Public Affairs, said earlier that the discussions would touch on the national situation, including the unresolved question over the legitimacy of the Arroyo presidency.

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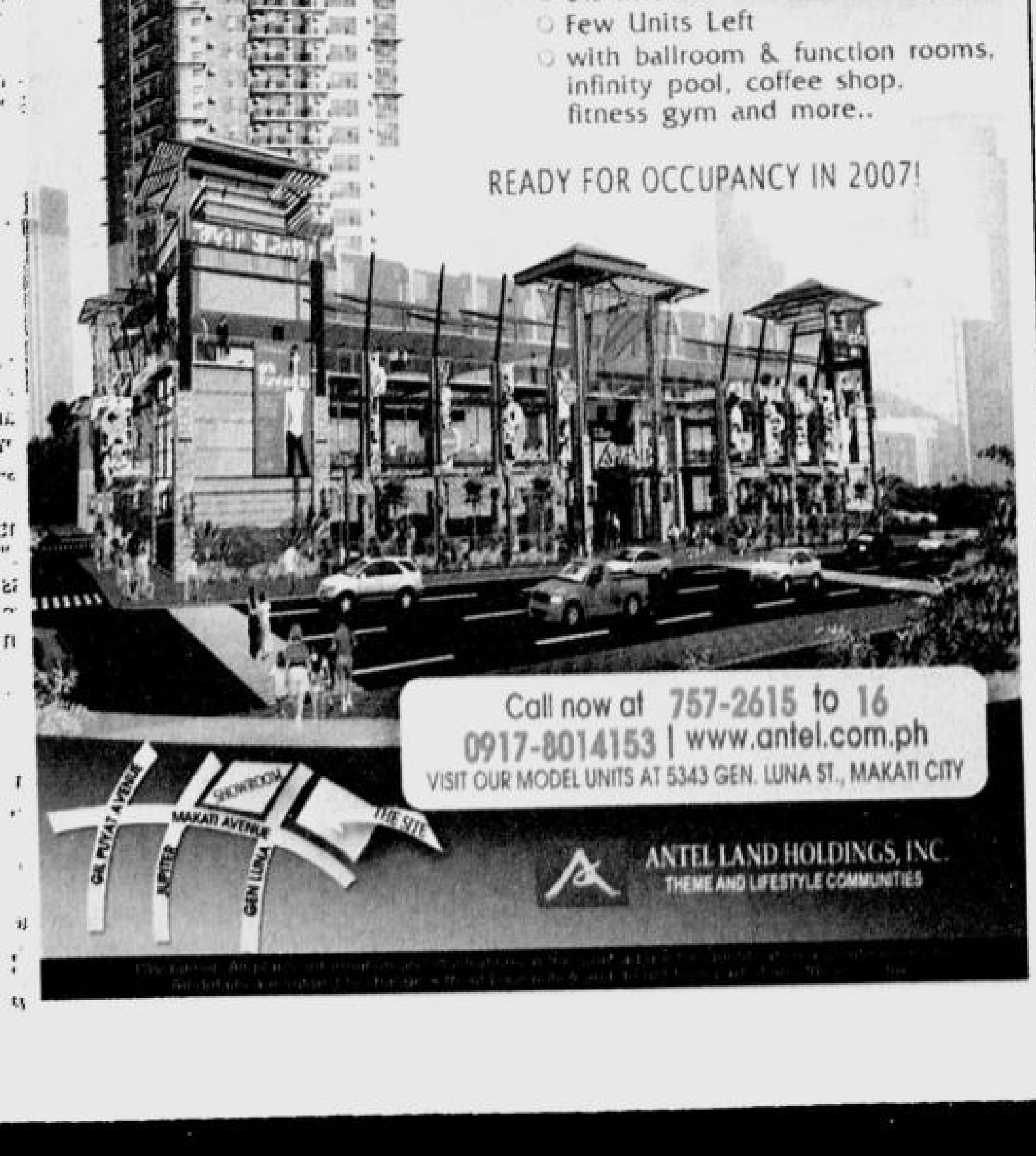

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Erap group hails Magdalo 4

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

DESCRIBING THE ESCAPE OF the four Oakwood mutineers as "energy-injecting," members of the United Opposition (UNO) finally broke months of silence yesterday and vowed to reinvigorate efforts to force President Macapagal-Arroyo out of Malacañang.

"This is the first cry of the United Opposition (this year): To start off a renewed, reenergized, reinvigorated GMA Step Down Campaign for 2006," former Sen. Ernesto Maceda said.

Sounding inspired by the statements of the four soldiers asking Ms Arroyo to step down, most of the opposition leaders who showed up at a meeting yesterday made references to the mutineers, whom Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay described as "nationalists."

"We take off our hats to them. We have an open invitation for them for tonight but we don't know how to contact them," Binay, also the UNO President, told reporters.

Former Sen. Ernesto Herrera said he believed that an "Oakwood II" was in the offing. It will be successful this time, according to former Sen. Francisco Tatad.

The meeting last night was the first big gathering of the political opposition this year, but fewer members showed up compared to previous meetings.

A puzzle: Intel head . . .

From page A1

their security escorts were boarding their respective service vehicles.

Quevedo, who was in *barong* Tagalog, as usual waved aside reporters who sought to interview him.

Sources said Trillanes could not have given the media interviews unless Quevedo, the custodian of Trillanes and three other alleged mutiny core leaders, had allowed him.

Trillanes got his half-hour talk with the media even as fellow Oakwood mutiny leader Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon escaped from Isafp custody by giving his escorts the slip on Dec. 14 outside the Makati RTC building.

Trillanes, who acted as spokesperson for the 300 junior officers and men who staged a mutiny at the Ayala Oakwood Premiere on July 27, 2003, was given by his Isafp custodians time to talk to the media.

Pre-arranged interview

As guards kept watch around media-mobbed Trillanes, the Magdalo leader entertained a few more questions before proceeding to the ground floor, where a news crew had set up for a pre-arranged interview with ABS-CBN's Ces Drilon.

Trillanes gladly answered Drilon's questions for 15 to 20 minutes, as other members of the media listened. A military guard, who was in plainclothes, meantime kept pointing to his watch to remind Drilon about the time.

Trillanes used the opportunity to the hilt to expound on his political views and to call on the nation to take a hard look at the Arroyo administration.

"It's time for all of us to decide which side we will take, whether we are for GMA [Ms Arroyo] or for change ... If you choose change, it means you want and you are hoping that your quality of life and that of your fellow Filipinos will be better," Trillanes said as mutineers and their security escorts listened.

"If you choose GMA, that means you are content with your situation now . . . until 2010," he also said.

Rock bottom

When the interview was wrapped up at around 12:20 p.m., Trillanes, surrounded by security, walked straight to his coaster waiting on the driveway.

Before he boarded his coaster though, he stopped for just a few seconds to rebut a TV reporter's query on whether the options he had laid would uplift or further degrade the nation's lot: "How can it go up or down? We're already rock-bottom."

With Trillanes and his guards aboard, the coaster then sped off, followed by two AUV's filled with armed guards.

Quevedo could not be reached for comment yesterday.

The AFP leadership has declared it would stay "neutral" amid the political crisis hounding the Commander in Chief ever since the "Hello Garci" tapes, which allegedly indicated that Ms Arroyo rigged the 2004 presidential election, emerged last June.

Escape part of bigger plot

From page A1

obviously a pseudonym. It did not provide details.

"We make up the New AFP. And we join our fellow Filipinos who now refuse to be cowed. We are a force that grows stronger by the day," the four Oakwood mutineers said in a statement issued through GMA 7.

The escape, the second after fellow mutineer Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon gave his guards the slip last month, has triggered fresh speculations of a plot to destabilize the Arroyo administration after the President's political foes failed to unseat her with an impeachment complaint in September and after several months of street protests.

Speaking through his lawyer, Magdalo leader Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV also said yesterday: "The escape of the four had the full blessings of our group. This is just part of things to come."

Lawyer Argee Guevarra was interviewed yesterday after he visited Trillanes and other leaders of the Magdalo group who are being held at the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines detention center.

On July 27, 2003, more than 300 junior officers and soldiers seized the posh Oakwood Premiere apartment-hotel in Makati City to denounce corruption in the military and the government. The mutiny was peacefully put down less than 24 hours later.

Trillanes' statement indicated that the escape of Rabonza, San Juan, Sarmiento and Bumidang had been planned well in advance.

"Be assured the four are not out there to harm anyone. Instead expect them to do the right things at the right time. I reiterate my call to the people to decide which side to take: GMA (Ms Arroyo) or change," Trillanes said.

Rabonza, San Juan, Sarmiento and Bumidang bolted Fort Bonifacio a few hours after Trillanes called on Filipinos to back either the President or change in a rare media interview outside the Makati Regional Trial Court.

"They're following a script, and it's part of a grand design to unseat Ms Arroyo," said a top police official, who is closely monitoring the anti-Arroyo movement.

The police official agreed to speak to the INQUIRER and discuss how the police viewed the escape on condition of anonymity.

He said the Magdalo group persisted in recruiting other officers and enlisted men to join a move to overthrow the Arroyo administration.

"Captain Faeldon escaped in December. He posted his photos on Monday. Trillanes spoke on Tuesday, then the four soldiers escaped. This is scripted. This is part of a grand scenario, and the aim is to overthrow GMA. The destabilization moves have started," he said.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales said he was investigating a new plot that included an alleged plan to assassinate the President and some members of her Cabinet.

Raw intelligence report

Gonzales admitted that the intelligence report was still "raw" but it generated a "degree of credibility" after the escape of the four Oakwood mutineers.

Asked whether the plot involved a coup, Gonzales said the "organizers fully realized that they couldn't launch a coup because the vast majority of the officers' corps [of the Armed Forces of the Philippines] was for keeping the AFP out of partisan politics."

Crisis conference

In the House of Representatives, an ally of Ms Arroyo raised the alarm over an impending coup.

"(The military should) not discount the possibility that the Magdalo soldiers' escape could be part of a plan to once again involve susceptible AFP members in political adventurism," said Minority Leader Prospero Nograles.

"The mere fact that five of the Magdalo leaders and members have already bolted from their facility means there's a big problem from within," he said.

The military top brass held an emergency crisis conference at Camp Aguinaldo yesterday morning to discuss the escape and the "morale" of the men. Army and police were on full alert in the capital, with checkpoints set up around military camps.

Oakwood II

The four fugitives' statement through GMA 7 news anchor Arnold Clavio, vowed to resume their failed attempt to oust Ms Arroyo.

"We have bolted from the repression of a bogus regime ... Our oath is clear: Our place is with our people; the people's will is sovereign," they said.

They denounced "corruption, illegitimacy and neglect" and said they seek "change [in] a system that installs the people's enemies in power and perpetuates the exclusion of the majority."

They said the number of restive troops in the military is growing.

Contact with lawyers

Rabonza, San Juan, Sarmiento and Bumidang made contact with their lawyers yesterday to erase doubts about their escape.

Bumidang told his lawyer, Roel Pulido, that he and the three others had received inside help when they escaped from the Custodial Management Unit building inside the maximum-security Intelligence Service Group compound in Fort Bonifacio.

"He said 'brother officers,' that's the term he used, rescued them because they learned there was an evil intention against them ... I don't know if that means a threat against their life or anything," Pulido said.

Pulido said he was able to talk to Bumidang over the phone at 5 a.m. yesterday. But late Wednesday night, he already received a text message from Bumidang.

He noted that Bumidang sounded relaxed and even cracked a joke.

Lawyer Theodore Te, who represents San Juan and Sarmiento, also received a text message from San Juan at 5 a.m. yesterday.

Doing fine

Te said San Juan said he and Sarmiento were doing fine and that they apologized for the trouble they had caused to their lawyers.

Former Sen. Rene Saguisag also received a text message from his client Rabonza yesterday.

The four were supposed to be transferred to another ISG detention building to prevent them from escaping, according to Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon. But they were discovered to be gone at 9 p.m. before they could be transferred.

Pulido said he did not press Bumidang on exactly how he and the others escaped.

Esperon, who said he was "embarrassed" by the escape, initially dismissed the officers' claim that they received inside help.

But he did not discount the possibility.

"We don't doubt our troops. They are doing a good job. But if that comes out in the investigation, so be it," Esperon said.

Esperon claimed he knew about the planned escape, and yet was unable to prevent it.

Relieved

None of the detainees' guards have been relieved. Instead, Brig. Gen. Ruben Rafael was relieved as Fort Bonifacio camp commander.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Generoso Senga called an emergency meeting among the top officials of the three major services—Army, Navy and Air Force. Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao was also at the meeting.

Senga stressed "the desire of the President to intensify the manhunt" against the escaped mutineers, according to Esperon.

Before the latest escape, the military and police made it a top priority to recapture Faeldon based on orders from the President.

But, Faeldon was able to launch a civil disobedience campaign and reportedly enter two military camps and the police national headquarters without getting caught.

About 130 of the Oakwood mutineers, deemed to have been misled, were freed from detention in late 2003. Nearly 200 others returned to their units last May after a military court ruled they had served sentences on lesser charges while confined to barracks. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Norman Bordadora*

Never again, says girl . . .

From page A1

Florencio "Butch" Abad and Batanes Rep. Henedina Razon-Abad, said she will never hold up the Bible again for Ms Arroyo.

"With all the controversies surrounding her, I think we deserve someone better," Abad said. Spoken like a true daughter of her father.

The older Abad was among the 10 ranking officials of the Arroyo administration who resigned on July 8, 2005, and asked Ms Arroyo to do the same and to answer accusations she cheated in the May 2004 elections.

FIVE YEARS AGO TODAY, Patsy Abad, then 11, was hustled to the makeshift stage to hold the Bible as Chief Justice Davide administered the oath of office to Ms Arroyo. PDI PHOTO

P200-bill

Collectively called the "Hyatt 10," the group has continued its call for Ms Arroyo to resign through the Black and White Movement, of which the older Abad is an active member.

A snapshot of the historic event will be immortalized on the P200 bill, an honor indeed for the teener nicknamed Patsy, now a charming 16-year-old senior high school student at Holy Spirit College.

"I'm part of history. It's a very nice blessing," she said, sheepishly. "My friends, they tease me. They call me *'mukhang pera'* because my face is on the P200 bill."

Family affair

Abad said the family was at Edsa when her father delivered a speech denouncing Estrada, who was impeached for plunder. It was her second day at Edsa when her Dad and siblings Julia Andrea, Pio Emmanuel and Luis Andres decided to join the march to Mendiola.

"They said it might not be safe, so I was left behind at Edsa with Mom," Abad said.

She recalled helping her mother and the nuns fix up things at the shrine.

Ironically, the Abad family now find itself on the same side of the political spectrum as the man they had helped oust from power.

Waste of time

The camp of former President Estrada called Edsa II a power grab pushed by powerful interests. Estrada spokesperson Rep. Didagen Dilangalen is trying to dissuade the country from commemorating Edsa II as it was not a "popular uprising. It's equivalent to celebrating the death of democracy."

"The country has not known a moment's peace since President Macapagal took over the reins of power," said Dilangalen.

Patsy remembered someone looking for "a young person wearing white," and of being told that she was going to hold up the Bible. (Abad's mother said it was actually Ma. Elena Bautista, then an event organizer and now the Land Transportation Office chief, who was scouting for a young person to do the job.)

"I thought I was going to offer the Bible during the Eucharistic Mass. I didn't realize it was the oath-taking," she recalled.

Things happened fast

Somebody also suggested that Abad wear her T-shirt inside out, to hide the butterfly design on the shirt. But nobody cared that she was only wearing khaki pants and rubber shoes.

Things happened fast. Looking back, Abad remembered being overwhelmed by the crowd and the photographers who were jostling onstage.

"I didn't know where to look. I was also scared I'd fall off the stage because I was being pushed toward the edge," she said during an interview at the Abad residence in Quezon City.

Global

Images of the event went around the globe as news spread about the downfall of Estrada. And Abad's relatives abroad, including her aunt, the late celebrated artist Pacita Abad, noted that the girl holding up the Bible looked familiar.

The most surprised was her Dad, who could not contain himself at the sight of his youngest daughter actually playing a part in history. The older Abad has also claimed his lifetime bragging rights.

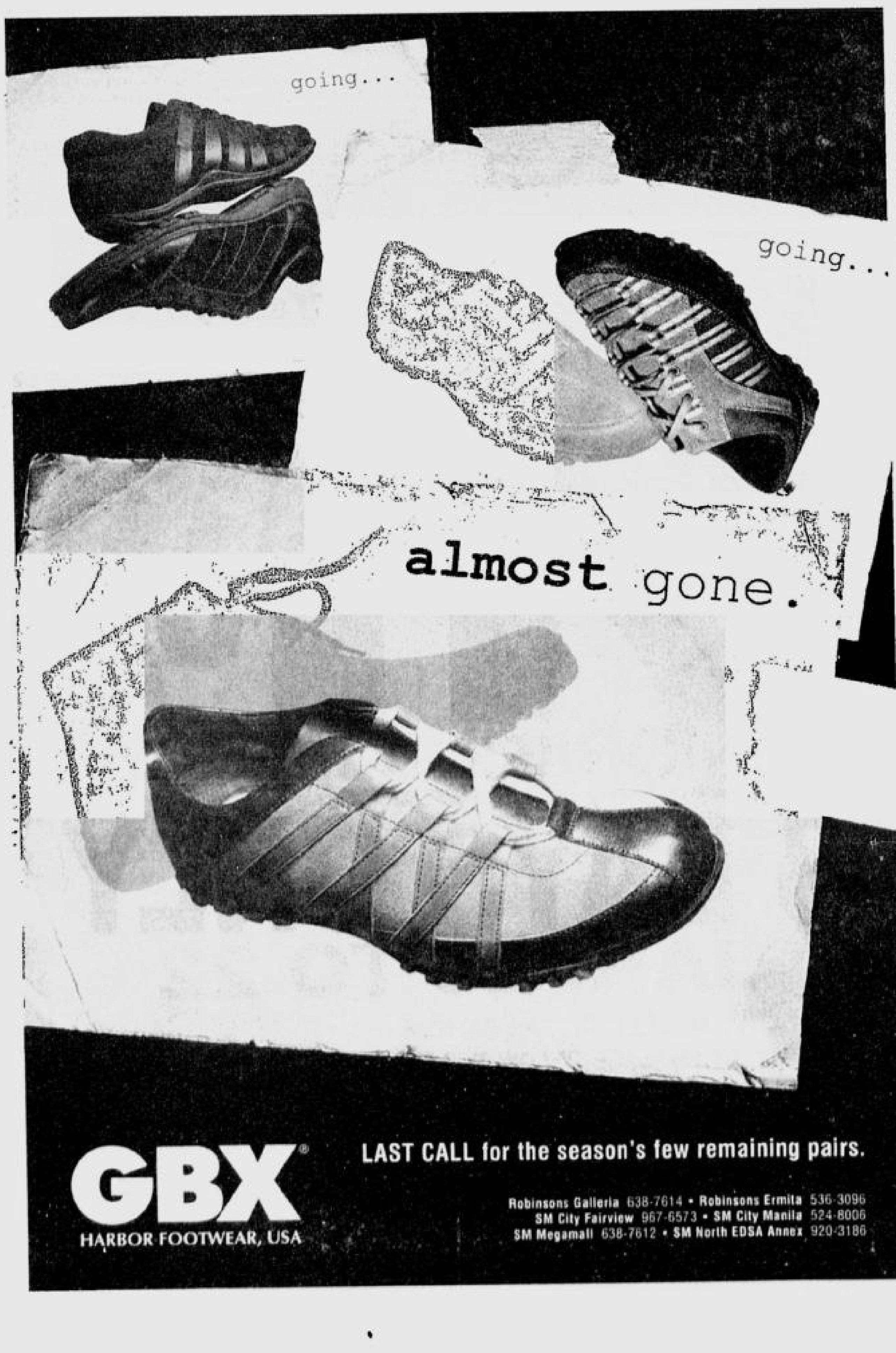
Bragging rights

"He is always telling people I am that girl," Abad giggled.

At the Abad family reunion in Batanes last December, Abad said her dad raffled off P200 bills with her signature. "It's a collector's item, *pwedeng ibenta sa* e-Bay," she said.

Abad has actually a sheet of uncut P200 bills given as memento from the Central Bank. She noted that in the picture, Ms Arroyo was actually taller than her.

Slim and pretty, Abad said she has grown three or four inches since then. "I'm taller now," she said, stretching to her full five-foot-two height.



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New power 'superbody' a new layer of bureaucracy, IPPs say

CREATING A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT through proper implementation of the the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira), not the creation of a new layer of bureaucracy, will solve the problems besetting the power industry.

This was the position of the Philippine Independent Power Producers Association (Pippa) on Executive Order No. 474 creating a power industry "superbody" that will forge private sector partnerships for energy projects.

President Macapagal-Arroyo issued EO 474 last November creating the Philippine Strategic Oil, Gas, Energy Resources and Power Infrastructure Office (PSOGERPIO), ostensibly to "avert the fast approaching energy crisis."

The agency is tasked, among others things, to identify and certify "national priority projects" and enter into agreements with private entities to undertake and realize these priority projects.

But Pippa said recent developments in the energy industry have caused much uncertainty and concern for the industry players and prospective investors. It said the creation of an energy "superbody" through EO No. 474 is perceived as a major setback to the government's thrust to privatize and sell the National Power Corp.'s (NPC) assets.

"The EO is symptomatic of a government wanting to go back to central planning, a policy that has only given the country disastrous results," it said. "It is also a complete reversal of Epira's vision of creating competition which will eventually benefit the consumers; and government finally getting rid of the burden of heavily subsidizing the NPC."

Ms Arroyo has postponed the implementation of EO 474 pending a review and further "fine-tuning." But the Pippa said it was still concerned about the damage the EO can inflict on the power industry should government decide to push through with it.

The proposed agency, Pippa said, is yet another means by which government can re-regulate and control the industry. It said: "It is a 'superbody'—a government instrumentality that can decide which power projects will be developed, who will develop them, how they will be financed. Its powers are as limited or as limitless as its imagination. By definition, it can effectively second-guess the ERC (Energy Regulatory Commission) and render it powerless."

Thus, it said, the Pippa strongly condemns any and all efforts to undermine the goals and gains of Epira's privatization and deregulation policies.

In 2001, Congress passed Republic Act No. 9136, otherwise known as the Epira, which, the Pippa said, promised a deregulated and privatized environment in which market forces and competition would dictate the terms and conditions of power supply and service. The Epira also created the ERC, a regulatory body.

"With all these in place, we ask the government to simply remain true to its word and allow the country to realize the benefits of true privatization and deregulation as promised by the Epira," Pippa said.

SBMA may soon issue ECCs

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN ADMINISTRATION is preparing an environmental impact assessment study of the entire Freeport zone to secure authority from the national government to approve projects in the environmentally critical area.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources will give the SBMA a programmatic environmental compliance certificate, or an ECC covering a special zone, if the SBMA meets all the requirements set by the DENR.

The SBMA and DENR signed last week a memorandum of agreement that would authorize the SBMA to issue ECCs and notices of violation, and impose and collect fines from erring firms, when it acquires the programmatic ECC.

"Even the monitoring and permitting requirements would be handled by the SBMA, but that is without prejudice to the DENR to issue ECCs for environmentally critical projects," Environmental Management Bureau executive director Lolibeth Medrano said yesterday.

Environmentally critical projects include the construction of major dams, and other activities related to the mining and petrochemical industries, and those that pose direct damage to the environment.

The DENR and SBMA have been in a legal tussle over the jurisdiction in clearing projects within the Freeport zone. The SBMA insists it has authority over the special zone, but the Court of Appeals has ruled that this did not cover the DENR's authority to issue ECCs.

Following a series of meetings last year, the DENR an SBMA finally inked an agreement last week to allow the SBMA to process and issue the ECCs once it has secured a programmatic ECC from the DENR.

Ely Lopez, Journal managing ed; 55

THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB (NPC) has expressed sadness and shock over the death of People's Journal managing editor Eleazar "Ely" S. Lopez.

Ely died of cardio-pulmonary attack yesterday. He was dead on arrival at the Ospital ng Maynila. He was 55. The body lies at the Mt. Carmel Chapel in New Manila, Quezon City.

A lifetime member of the NPC, Ely is survived by his wife Concepcion and children Eric, Erwin and Eleazar Jr.

NPC President Tony Antonio paid tribute to Ely, saying he was a serious competent and hard-hitting journalist in both print and radio.

Former NPC president Louie Logarta said Ely was one of the pillars of Journals Group, noting that he had been with Journal since its inception.

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BMW 318i Exec.	2004	Titanium Silver	25,000	P1,750,000	BMW 525i Exec.	2004	Black Sapphire	11,501	P3,800,000
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Congress oversight body calls for end to VFA in 6 months

From page A1

On the motion of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, the Lovfa also voted to include in the resolution a paragraph that would "terminate all funding from the Philippine government for the Balikatan exercises," effectively stopping RP-US military exercises until after the trial of the accused.

"This is our initial response to the United States' [refusal to surrender] custody of the accused to the Philippine government," said Cuenco, who chairs the House foreign affairs committee.

He added: "I hope our executive department will feel the pulse and the sense of the House and the Senate in this matter. It's an outrage.

GMA 'ethically bound'

"We should also intensify our diplomatic efforts along with this desire of ours to terminate and renegotiate the treaty."

The resolution—which stemmed from the US Embassy's refusal on Monday to surrender the Americans charged with rape—will be submitted next week to the two chambers of Congress for approval before it is sent to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The resolution will be sent to the President, who will, in effect, be ethically bound to transmit it to the US Embassy through the DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs)," Santiago said.

"Since Congress sets foreign policy by the Senate power to concur in treaties, it is Congress therefore that will set the policy on whether a treaty shall be terminated or renegotiated," she said.

After the President formally notifies the US government of the Philippine intent to terminate the treaty, there will still be a period of six months before the treaty is "automatically terminated."

"We are hoping that we can negotiate with the US a treaty provision that makes custody by the Philippines compulsory or automatic once a criminal complaint is filed in court by the state prosecutor," Santiago said.

This provision is found in the Status of Forces Agreements forged by the United States with South Korea, Japan and Germany.

"My hope is that during the next six months, if the US is serious about a VFA, it will on its own initiative request a renegotiation. It can at least give us the courtesy of asking, Why do you wish to terminate it?" Santiago said.

Cuenco said the President had to abrogate the VFA because "the prospect of the US agreeing to our request for custody of the four Marines through diplomatic channels looks very dim."

"I hope she does," he told the INQUIRER, adding that the ball was now in Ms Arroyo's court.

Unchanged views

Reached by the INQUIRER for comment, the US Embassy maintained its stance.

"Our views have not changed that the VFA is a mutually beneficial and useful framework that clarifies the legal status of visiting US military personnel and enables both the US and the Philippines to advance their national security interests," press attaché Matthew Lussenhop said.

He said the US government remained "focused on seeing that justice is served" in connection with the rape case that, he noted, was now "proceeding to trial" under the terms of the VFA.

He also said the embassy would "continue to cooperate" with Philippine authorities.

Lussenhop declined to comment on the concurrent resolution itself or on the lawmakers' deliberations, but said that as standard procedure, the embassy was keeping Washington updated on developments.

Philippine prison

Fresh from the failed diplomatic effort to gain custody of the accused, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo assured lawmakers that the Americans would do time in a Philippine prison if convicted.

Romulo, who is in Washington, made the assurance in a statement read in his behalf by Undersecretary Rafael Seguis at the Lovfa deliberations on the concurrent resolution.

"The accused will be tried in accordance with Philippine laws. If found guilty, this primary jurisdiction continues, and incarceration in the Philippines follows," Romulo said.

"Pursuant to the VFA, the US has assured us of Philippine custody after trial, if the accused are found guilty," he said.

Romulo conceded a "problem" with the VFA provisions on custody, suggesting that this weakened the legal basis of the Philippine request for custody.

"As pointed out by several Philippine experts in international law, the problem lies in the absence of a common definition of what constitutes an 'extraordinary case ... '" he said.

In a separate statement, the DFA indicated that it had not given up on its custody talks with American diplomats.

It said a second note verbale was sent to the US mission last Jan. 17 "reiterating" the Philippine position and asking that "discussions" continue.

Romulo also said the DFA would continue to negotiate for custody even during the trial of the accused.

But Enrile said the second note verbale would "sleep the sleep of the dead."

"My brutal, candid, realistic and pragmatic position is that we can never get custody of these people. That's a fact of life. If you don't have the guns, the clout, they'll step on you like a rat," he said.

Romulo has been in Washington since last week for engagements that, according to the department's media office, have nothing to do with the rape case.

But Seguis told the Lovfa that Romulo had raised the issue of Philippine custody over the Marines with a deputy of US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"Your honor, I understand that Secretary Alberto Romulo had met with the deputy assistant secretary of state," Seguis told Santiago.

He said the US official, whom he did not name, visited Romulo's hotel but that the DFA chief got the same response "as what the US Embassy gave us."

This led Santiago to wryly ask why Rice herself did not meet with Romulo.

Only a deputy

"Deputy *na*, assistant *pa?*" *Santiago said, adding:*

"Apparently, all of these indicate that the US does not look highly on the Philippines. In fact, it looks so askance at the Philippines that it has not bothered to appoint a regular ambassador [for Manila]. *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

US Embassy asked: Who's in charge?

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

THE PROSECUTION IN THE RAPE case against four US Marines wants to know: Who is the American official directly accountable for their custody?

Olongapo City Prosecutor Prudencio Jalandoni yesterday observed that US Embassy officials had been providing "a general answer" to the question of custody, and had not gone beyond invoking pertinent provisions in the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

"They keep on saying they are retaining custody of these servicemen, but they haven't told us yet the name of the official responsible for [the four]," he told the INQUIRER.

According to Jalandoni, the embassy should name the actual custodian of the servicemen charged with raping a Filipino woman because it is this person who will receive and implement judicial notices and assume liability if any of the four flees.

He said the issue of custody was "clearer" during the time when the US government maintained military bases in Luzon.

Back then, state prosecutors issued a "legal hold" document against erring US servicemen, he said.

Jalandoni said the document served as a hold-departure order, meaning the offenders were not allowed to leave the country until the case was finished. Base commanders issued custody receipts that named the official responsible for the offenders.

He said that even in cases where offenders were tried in military courts, Filipino judges and prosecutors were informed of who the custodians were.

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Morales says he's too good for Pacquiao

From page A1

ready to promptly bang it up with Pacquiao, whom he had beaten in their first encounter.

Minutes earlier, Pacquiao spoke in English to steal the show while thanking the promoters, host Steve Wynn, his countrymen, his friend, President Macapagal-Arroyo, and other Filipino politicians coming to back him in his quest for immortality against Morales.

Built-in superiority

Morales, in quietly explaining his built-in superiority, repeated what his manager Fernando Beltran had told the INQUIRER upon their arrival here that the result of the 12-round rematch on Saturday would not be too different from last year's: Morales would emerge winner.

The prevailing confidence in the Mexican camp was fueled by the truism that, while Team Pacquiao claimed having learned from their mistakes, Morales would be improving on their tested victory formula. They would be much ahead improving on their winning ways.

"I just can be where I want to be inside the ring, I can do whatever I want to do inside there," said Morales to stress his multi-dimensional advantage over Pacquiao, who is generally perceived as a one-track slasher.

"I'm in great shape, mentally and physically," Morales added. "I fight a different fight, I fight better."

Of course, it's no secret that the southpaw Pacquiao has worked overtime, real hard, to make adjustments and boost his skills that could now include a counterattack right out of a weave or a duck, unlike last time when he was often caught retreating frantically.

All that, conceded Morales, was to be expected from a loser.

Makings of a classic

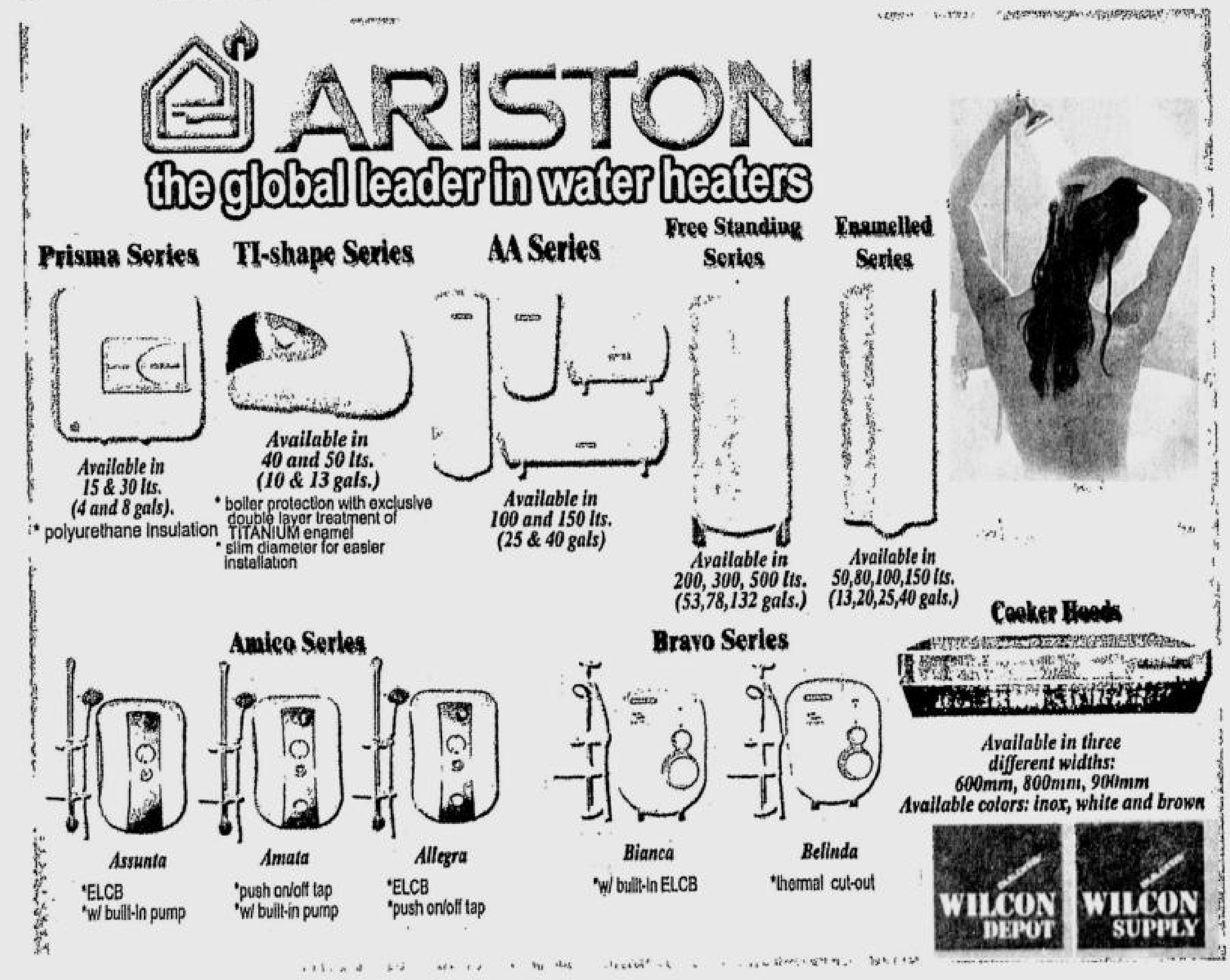
"But they would be making a mistake if they based their hopes and plans on what happened last time when I lost against Zahir Raheem," Morales explained.

For his part, Top Rank big boss Bob Arum, said the Battle has the makings of a classic.

"No chess games, Morales and Pacquiao will bring in their A-game, everything," the fabled prizefight impresario quipped.

Pacquiao was described by promoter Gary Shaw as the only foreign fighter who can speak straight English.

Pacquiao greeted Mexican fans in Spanish—muchas gracias and expect a gran pelea—to the delight of a television crew from Tijuana, Morales' birthplace.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'Brokeback' breaks . . .

From page A1

and lesbian cowgirls took part in the gay rodeo at Chandler in the Arizona desert at the weekend.

For years such rodeos were shunned and even run out of some towns. Now the unorthodox event is a welcomed part of the cowboy diary, though many participants have lived their own tales like "Brokeback Mountain," which won three Golden Globes on Monday and is now in the frontline for the Oscars.

Kurt McGregor, a spokesperson for the Road Runner gay rodeo, said there were firefighters, doctors, construction workers and other professionals among the members.

"As in 'Brokeback Mountain,' lots of us are actually married, some even have had children, before they understood they couldn't change," he said.

Dressed in drag

Like other cowboys, the members of the Chandler gay rodeo like to ride horses, catch a calf with their bare hands or rope a bull.

But the Road Runner Rodeo has its own special characteristics.

Competitors also have to put underwear on the back legs of a sheep or tie a ribbon on the tail of the calf they have just hauled over.

But the biggest test is where a cowboy dressed in drag has to ride an angry bull without falling.

Protective headwear is compulsory but one competitor joked: "Should we wear the helmet on the wig or the wig on the helmet."

Chandler is part of the International Gay Rodeo Association which has existed for about two decades and now organizes 20 events a year in the United States and Canada.

It has about 1,000 members across North America.

Homophobia

"We are people who like the Western style of life, but we don't want to suffer from prejudices because of our gayness," said Alan Stark, 43, who works for a railroad company in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

"Brokeback Mountain," the story of a secret love between two cowboys in the 1960s and '70s, has had a strong impact on real gay cowboys as well as critics who have acclaimed the film and its Taiwanese director Ang Lee.

"I grew up in Oklahoma, a redneck state. When I realized I was gay, I really had to hide and be very careful," added Stark.

Jason, who acts as the Rodeo clown to entertain the Chandler crowds between the events, said: "I hope I can show this film to my parents. It's full of memories." *AFP*

Japanese fugitive arrested at Naia

JAPANESE FUGITIVE Yukio Oneda was arrested by immigration agents Tuesday night at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport after he arrived on a Thai Airways flight from Bangkok.

The 57-year-old Oneda is wanted in Japan for allegedly bringing Thai women into the country to work as prostitutes.

A Japanese court had issued a warrant for Oneda's arrest on Aug. 26, 2005, for violation of Japan's employment security law, the equivalent of the Philippines' antihuman trafficking law.

The charge was based on one incident of alleged recruitment by the suspect of a Thai woman who was forced into prostitution after Oneda allegedly handed her over to an accomplice. The woman was reportedly delivered to a prostitution den in Ueda-shi in Nagano prefecture.

Last year, Oneda arrived in the Philippines on Oct. 20.

Interpol-Tokyo and Japan's national police agency informed the Bureau of Immigration about Oneda's fugitive status.

The Japanese authorities also told Fernandez that Oneda had visited Thailand 54 times since January 2002 and was always in the company of Thai women when he returned to Japan.

On Oct. 28, 2005, Fernandez issued a mission order to arrest Oneda but the Japanese was able to elude BI agents and escape to Thailand on Nov. 8.

The BI placed him on its watch list on Nov. 17 and it was that information that popped up when he tried to reenter the country last Tuesday.

Fernandez said Oneda will be deported. He is being held at the BI detention center in Taguig City pending his ouster from the country.

Leila B. Salaverria

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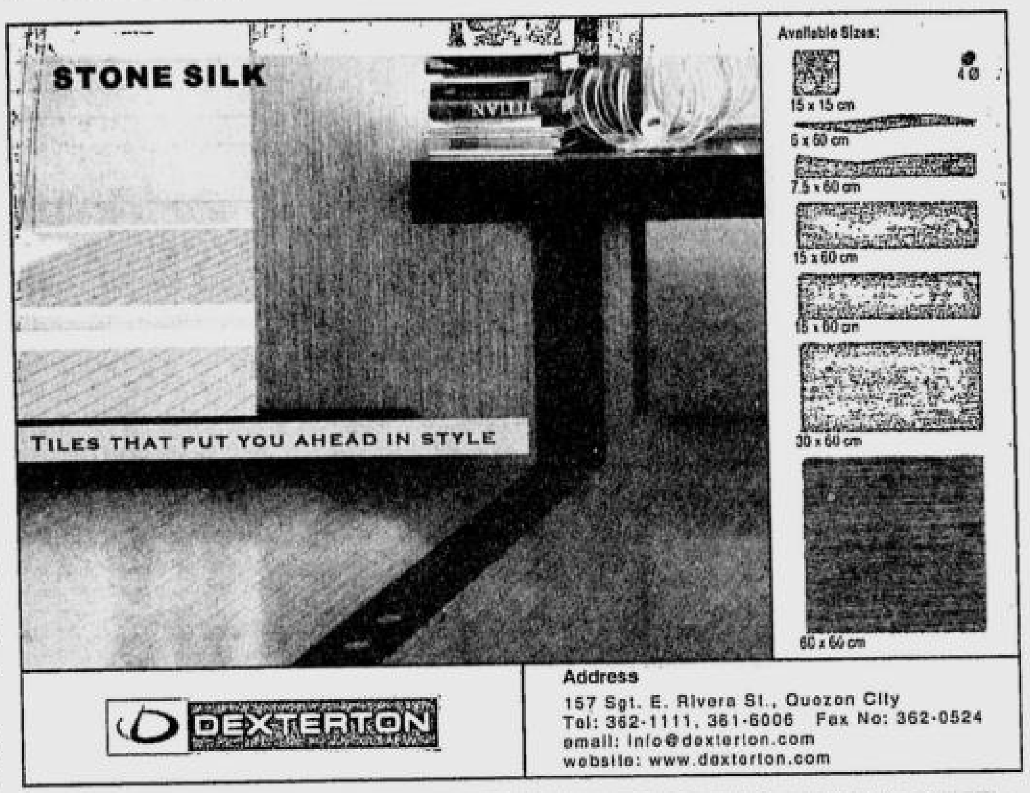
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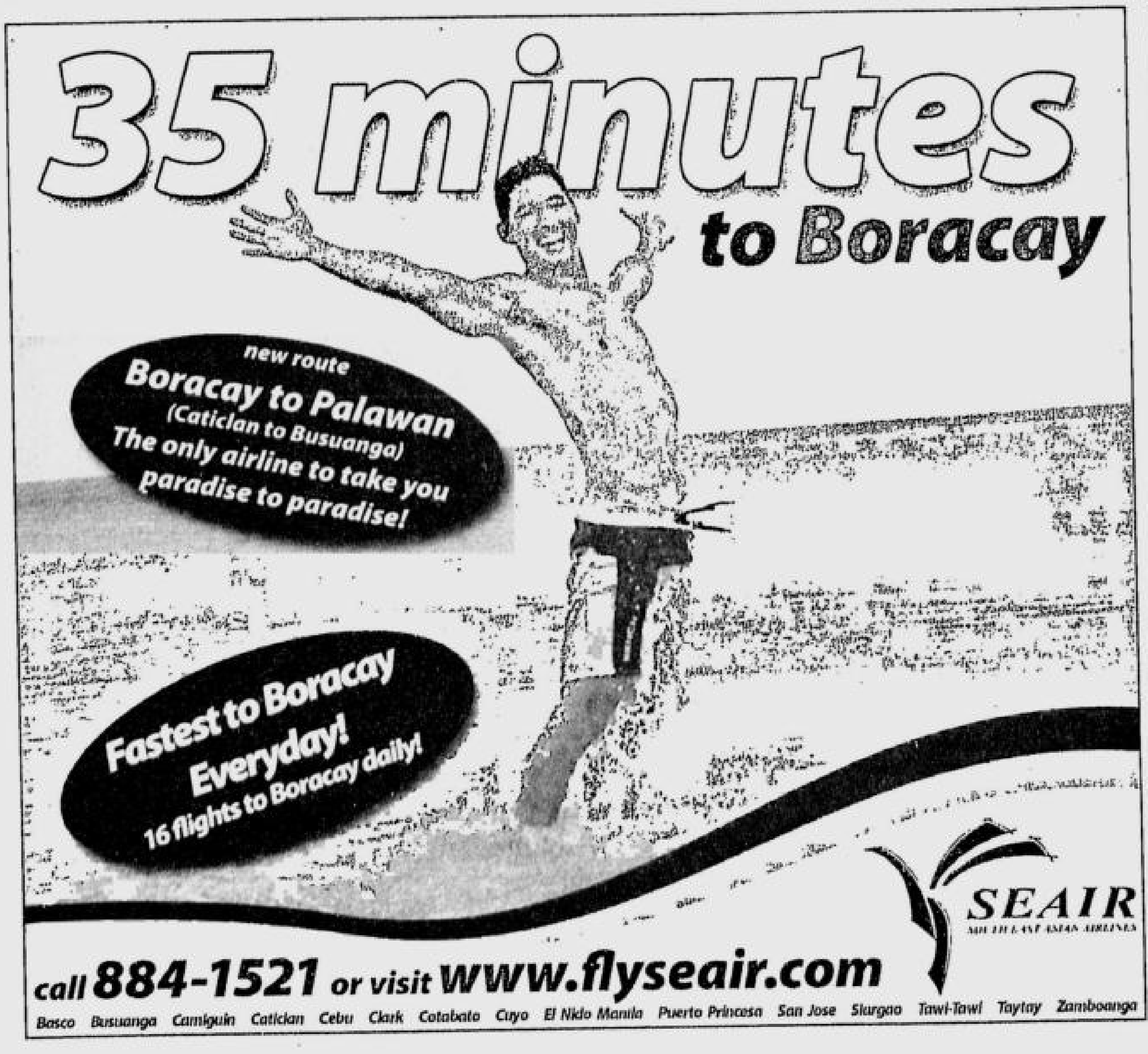
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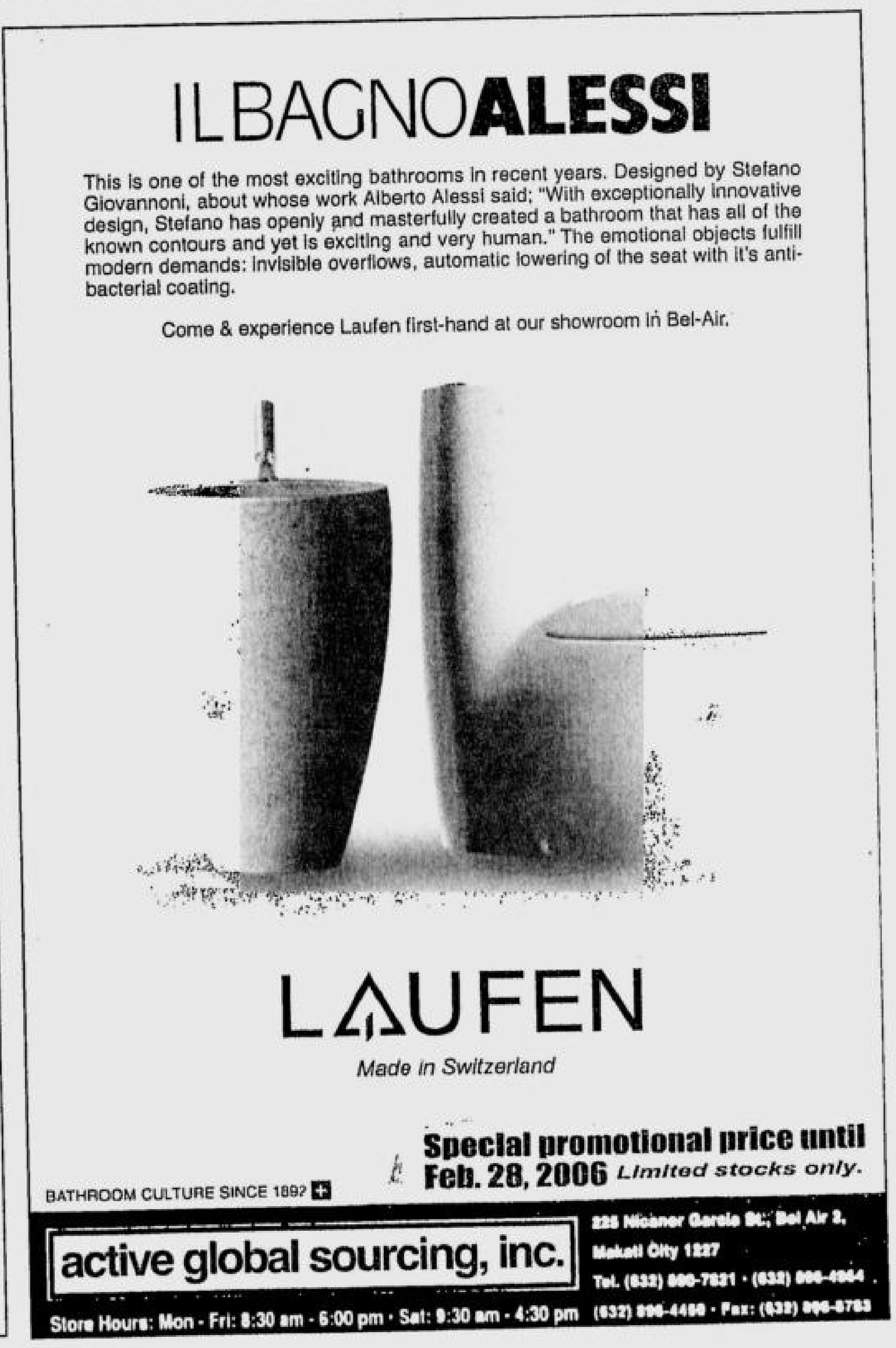
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US, EU rebuff Iran call for nuke talks

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES AND THE European Union on Wednesday rebuffed an Iranian call for new talks on their nuclear dispute and pressed their drive to refer Tehran to the UN Security Council.

"I think we're long passed the point of talk. We expect action from the regime in Iran," White House spokesperson Scott McClellan told reporters .

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana agreed the Iranians had yet to show they were ready to deal with Western fears they were seeking to develop nuclear weapons.

Rice said the message from Washington's European allies, which had been negotiating with Tehran, was "there is not much to talk about" after Iran moved to resume sensitive nuclear research last week.

"I think it's up to the Iranians to demonstrate that they are not just talking but they are serious," Rice told reporters before meeting with Solana at the state department.

"It was the Iranians who walked away from the negotiations, who broke the moratorium (on nuclear activities)," Rice said of the effort led by Britain, France and Germany to resolve the crisis.

The so-called EU-3 has joined with the United States in seeking an emergency meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, with the aim of hauling Iran before the UN Security Council.

Solana said the EU had received a letter from Iran's national security adviser requesting a resumption of the discussions on a package of economic and other incentives for Tehran that began more than a year ago.

"We replied that it doesn't make much sense to have another meeting if there is nothing new in what they are going to put on the table," Solana said. France and Britain have already spurned the Iranian offer.

"I think the position now is what we have said ... which is to have a decision to call for an extraordinary meeting in Vienna of the (IAEA) agency and then to refer the dossier to the Security Council," Solana said.

The initiative was clouded by the reluctance of countries such as Russia and China, two of the council's five veto-wielding permanent members, to back eventual UN sanctions against Iran.

Solana told reporters that Russia, which has offered to handle Iran's uranium-enrichment work on its soil as a control measure, was trying to buy some more time for it to negotiate with Tehran.

He said Moscow wanted the UN Security Council to informally discuss the case before an official decision on a UN referral. The Russians also saw no need for the IAEA to meet before its regularly scheduled session on March 6. *AFP*

Top bombmaker killed in Pakistan airstrike, says US

ISLAMABAD—AN AL-QAIDA BOMB EXPERT with a $5 million bounty on his head and a son-in-law of the group's No. 2 were among four militants believed killed by a US airstrike last week, Pakistani intelligence sources said on Thursday.

Pakistani Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed acknowledged that "a few militants" had been killed in Friday's attack, which also killed 18 civilians, but said their bodies had not been recovered and their identity was under investigation.

However, intelligence sources said they believed they knew the names of three men killed in the attack, which US officials say was aimed at al-Qaida second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Pakistani intelligence sources said al-Zawahiri was not at the scene of the attack, but one of the dead was thought to be one of his sons-in-law, Abdul Rehman Al-Misri al Maghribi, who was responsible for al-Qaida's media department.

Another was Midhat Mursi al-Sayid 'Umar, an expert in explosives and poisons who carried a $5 million on his head from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Pakistani officials gave a slightly different spelling for the name, but the FBI says 'Umar ran a training camp at Derunta in Afghanistan and since 1999 had proliferated training manuals containing crude recipes for chemical and biological weapons.

ABC News and the New York Times, citing Pakistani officials, also reported that the 52-year-old Egyptian had been killed.

"If this person is gone, it is significant. His loss, and the loss of people like him, would certainly be a blow to al-Qaida in the region," said a US counterterrorism official, who asked not to be identified.

The third man identified by Pakistani intelligence officers was Abu Obaidah al Misri, al-Qaida's chief of operations in Afghanistan's eastern Kunar province, where US and Afghan forces regularly come under militant attack. *Reuters*

Planning urged vs flu as SARS chaos recalled

WASHINGTON—HOSPITALS MAY HAVE TO adapt military-style triage in case of a bird flu pandemic, and must get plans into place now for dealing with one, a Canadian expert said on Wednesday.

Toronto hospitals that had to deal with the 2003 SARS outbreak learned the hard way that it pays to have plans and procedures in place before an emergency happens, said Dr. Laura Hawryluck, of the University of Toronto, and a member of the Critical Care Pandemic Triage Provincial Committee.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome spread out of southern China in 2003 and eventually was spread to spots around the world by air travelers, killing about 800 people and infecting close to 8,000 before it was brought under control in July 2003.

It killed 44 people in Toronto and forced the quarantine of more than 10,000.

A pandemic of H5N1 avian influenza would be worse. The disease now mostly affects birds but it has occasionally jumped to people, killing just around 80 in six countries.

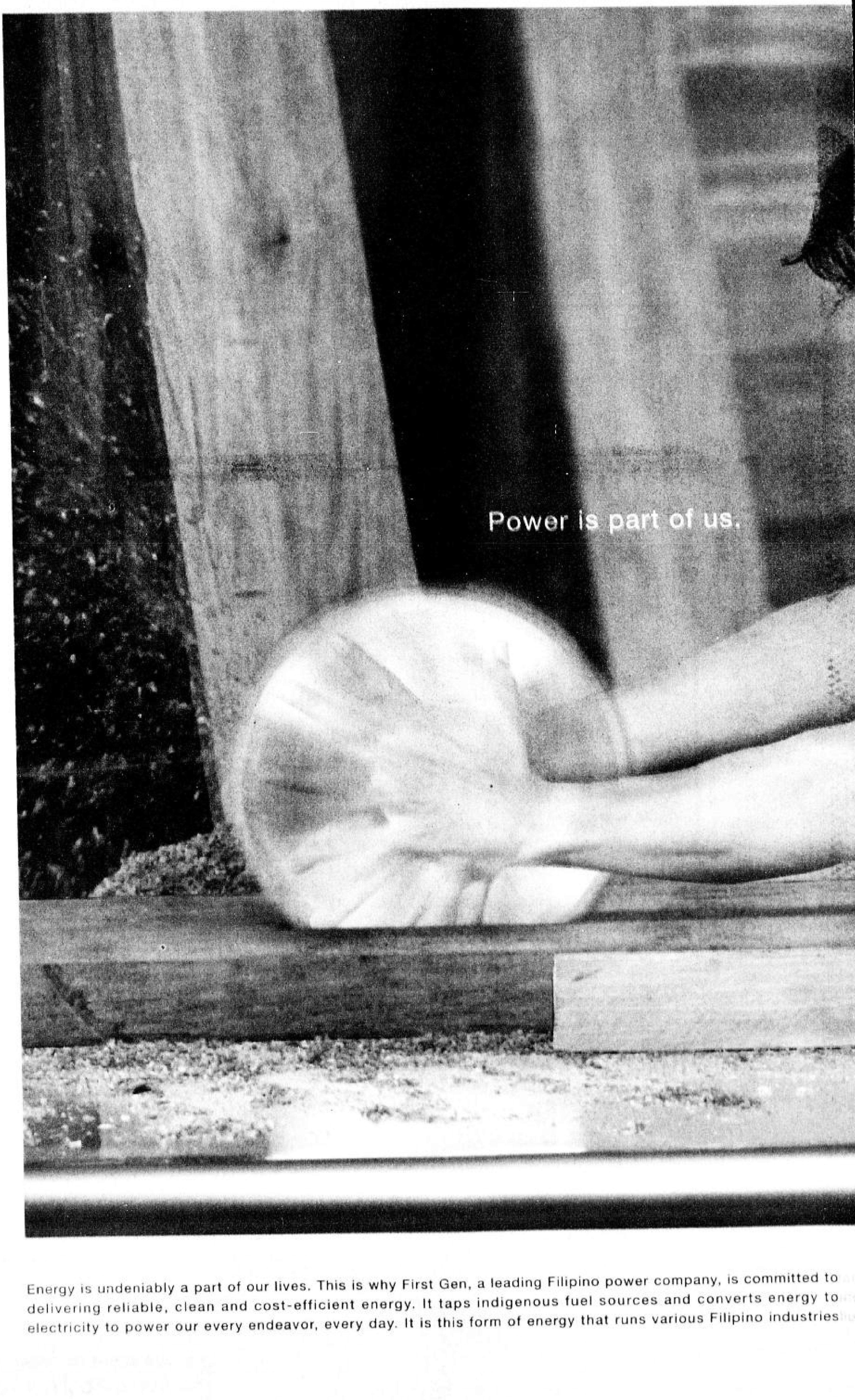
The fear is that the virus could mutate into a human influenza, spread quickly and kill millions globally.

World health leaders say no one is ready to deal with this.

Canada learned some lessons from SARS but will not have all the resources needed to cope, said Hawryluck.

"What we have been told is to expect about a 34 percent attack (infection) rate over a six-week period," Hawryluck told an Internet-based seminar of medical professionals.

That would overload current capacity for intensive care units with influenza patients alone—not including all the other needs for an ICU, which are already almost full to capacity every day, she said. *Reuters*



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China struggles to curb growing social unrest

BEIJING—PUBLIC ORDER DISTURBANCES in China are on the rise, a police spokesperson said on Thursday, further evidence of growing instability that the ruling Communist Party is struggling to curb.

China has been grappling with an acknowledged increase in social unrest, sparked by public anger over issues ranging from land grabs without proper compensation and official corruption to a yawning wealth gap.

The Ministry of Public Security put the total number of "public order disturbances, obstructions of justice, gathering of mobs and stirring up of trouble" at 87,000 last year, up 6.6 percent from 2004.

While the ministry did not say how many people had been arrested or charged, the figure reinforces a tally of "mass incidents"—communist jargon for mass protests—which showed a 28 percent rise from 2003 to 2004.

Hong Kong's Beijing-owned Ta Kung Pao newspaper has quoted Public Security Minister Zhou Yongkang as saying there were 74,000 "mass incidents" in 2004 compared with 58,000 in 2003.

Ministry spokesperson Wu Heping declined to give a figure for mass incidents last year.

"Demands by masses have emerged due to rapid economic and social development. Communist Party committees and governments at all levels attach a high degree of importance to this problem," Wu told a news conference.

"We hope the masses can voice their appeals through lawful channels and consciously safeguard public order and respect laws ... We hope problems can be resolved harmoniously and in an orderly way."

To curb growing unrest, two top generals in the People's Armed Police pledged this month to boost the "combat effectiveness" of the one-million-strong paramilitary police.

New national emergency response measures require local officials to get news of unrest straight into the hands of central leaders. It is common for local authorities to cover up such incidents to avoid hurting their chances of promotion.

In December, paramilitary police opened fire on residents of Dongzhou village in the southern province of Guangdong protesting against a lack of compensation for land appropriated for a new power plant. The government says three villagers were killed.

This month, a Chinese court jailed four villagers for up to five years for staging an antipollution protest that turned violent in Dongyang in the eastern province of Zhejiang in April.

Ministry spokesperson Wu said the number of attacks with explosives nationwide had fallen by 13.7 percent to 980 last year.

He gave no details. China has a track record of fudging statistics to cover up problems in its drive to perpetuate one-party rule.

The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, a top government think-tank, revealed in a policy paper on social issues that 2,500 explosions had rocked China in the first nine months of 1998. It failed to say how many were deliberate.

The ministry spokesperson said the number of murders nationwide had dropped by 15.9 percent last year, rapes by 6.8 percent and trafficking of women and children 13.7 percent.

Some 13.6 percent of people arrested by police were under 18. *Reuters*

CHINESE models show off their painted bodies during a body painting performance at a restaurant in Nanjing Jan. 17. Municipal authorities have banned nude body shows in public places since May 2005. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Ambush, kidnaps in Iraq

BAGHDAD—Insurgents mounted a major ambush in Baghdad on Wednesday, killing up to 10 people and kidnapping one and possibly two African engineers in a second coordinated attack in the capital in as many days. In the southern city of Basra, two employees of a US security firm were killed and one wounded when their convoy was blasted by a bomb; the family of a kidnapped American journalist appealed for her release as a group possibly linked to her abductors said it freed a sister of Iraq's interior minister. Security forces say they are bracing for a possible spike in violence by Sunni Arab rebels when the final results of last month's election come out, probably on Friday; they will show continued dominance for the ruling Shiite Islamist bloc. *Reuters*

US rights abuse hit

NEW YORK—US counterterrorism policies, with their deliberate use of "torture and mistreatment," put the global defense of human rights on the back foot in 2005, Human Rights Watch said in its annual report Wednesday. The New York-based monitor said the US strategy has fueled terrorist recruitment and hampered Washington's ability to pressure other countries into respecting international law. "Fighting terrorism is central to the human rights cause," said Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch. "But using illegal tactics against alleged terrorists is both wrong and counterproductive." The watchdog also criticized US allies in the war on terror for undermining critical international protections, citing Britain for seeking to send suspects to governments likely to torture, and Canada for moves to dilute a new treaty outlawing enforced disappearances. *AFP*

Norvasc patent upheld

NEW YORK—Pfizer Inc. said yesterday that a federal court in the Northern District of Illinois has upheld the company's US patent covering amlodipine besylate, the active ingredient in Norvasc, the world's most-prescribed branded medicine for treating hypertension. The patent had been challenged by the generic manufacturer Apotex. Judge James M. Rosenbaum ruled that the patent (US Patent No. 4,879,303) covering amlodipine besylate is valid, enforceable and infringed by the generic manufacturer's product. The decision, which is subject to appeal, prohibits Apotex from launching a generic version of amlodipine until September 2007. "The court decision is another important victory for medical innovators who invest in high-risk research to develop life saving medicines, as well as for the patients who benefit from those medicines," said Jeffrey Kindler, vice chairman and general counsel of Pfizer.

Indonesia atrocities

SYDNEY—The Indonesia military used starvation and sexual violence as weapons to control East Timor during a 24-year occupation of the province that caused the deaths of up to 180,000 civilians, according to a report cited Thursday by The Australian newspaper. The newspaper said it obtained a copy of the 2,500-page report by the East Timorese Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, which is due to be handed to the United Nations by East Timor President Xanana Gusmao on Friday. The report detailed how Indonesian soldiers used napalm and chemical weapons to poison food and water supplies during their 1975 invasion of the territory, a former Portuguese colony with an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic population. *AFP*

38 dead in Kenya battle

LODWAR, Kenya—A battle for livestock between Ethiopian and Kenyan nomads has left 38 people dead in drought-stricken northern Kenya, official and aid workers said Thursday. Dongiro warriors crossed into Kenya last Friday and attacked Turkana herdsmen in order to steal their animals, said Njenga Miiri, the district commissioner for Turkana. The fighting killed 30 of the raiders and eight Kenyans, all of them women and children. The clashes took place in the remote village of Lokamarinyang, along the Kenya-Ethiopia border and 420 km north of Lodwar, area aid worker Lucas Ariong said. News of the battle only reached the regional capital Thursday morning. *AP*

Russia freeze kills 24

MOSCOW—Russia early Thursday was bracing itself for a second day of freezing cold, with authorities recommending Moscow businesses send employees back home to save energy, as overnight temperatures again fell below minus 30 C (minus 22 F) in the capital and even lower elsewhere. Twenty four people froze to death in western Russia Wednesday, and Moscow switched to a "strict" energy conservation regime. In the northwest Russian region of Novgorod, 12 people, most of them homeless, died of hypothermia overnight, the Interfax news agency said. Separately, authorities collected the bodies of 10 people found on the streets of Volgograd. *AFP*

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OPINION

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An inside job

EDITORIAL

AS MUCH AS IT MIGHT IRRITATE OTHERS, THE obligation of an attorney is to protect his client within the bounds of the law. Therefore, when lawyer Roel Pulido heard that four of the Oakwood mutineers were going to be moved from their detention cells in Fort Bonifacio to somewhere supposedly more secure, he rushed to attend to his clients.

Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., chief of the Philippine Army, says that the military got wind of a possible escape attempt by the officers (Capt. Nathaniel Rabonza and 1st Lieutenants Lawrence San Juan, Sonny Sarmiento and Patricio Bumindang Jr.). Because of the intelligence reports, the military decided to transfer the prisoners from the Custodial Management Unit (CMU) to a nearby building. Pulido, on the other hand, says that the transfer was going to be carried out without so much as a by-your-leave from a judge or even a notice to the lawyers of the prisoners.

Things got confusing when Pulido showed up at Fort Bonifacio. The military claims that Pulido's appearance was a diversionary tactic, because the officers escaped while he was arguing with military officials. The prisoners stacked some chairs, climbed out of a window, cut through barbed wire barriers, and escaped.

Certainly, military officials from Esperon on down have no reason to look kindly on Pulido, who spent the hours immediately following the escape suggesting that there was the dire possibility of a rubout of the prisoners either being contemplated or being carried out. Pulido subsequently admitted that Bumindang had called him to say they had truly escaped, with the assistance of fellow soldiers in Fort Bonifacio.

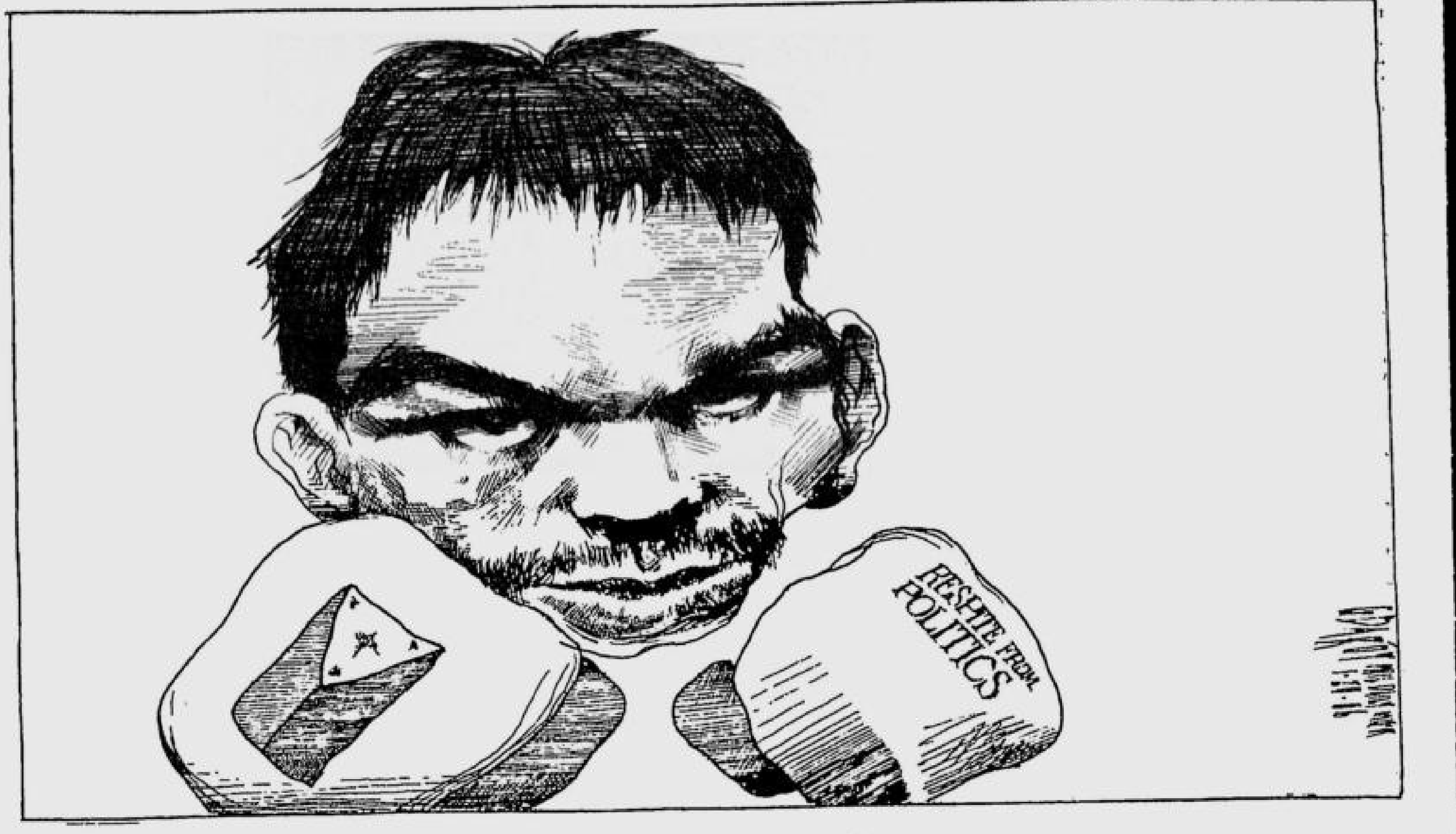
So it was an inside job, which is certainly a more logical explanation than the one initially put forward by Esperon. After all, it is outrageous to think that one lawyer, however argumentative or excited, could manage to monopolize the energy and attention of the military to the extent that he made the escape possible. Had security been really tight, had the military really been strict about security, had the escapees really had only their lawyer to rely on, the escape would have been impossible. Simply surrounding the building with soldiers at the ready would have resulted in the apprehension of the escapees the moment they climbed out of that window.

Like other famous prisoner escapes (those of Col. Gringo Honasan in the 1980s come to mind), what's obvious is that the military's top brass aren't fully on top of the situation. Soldiers guarding soldiers—and in particular, earnest young officers—results in the enlisted men tasked with guarding prisoners being seduced into assisting in the escape of the prisoners.

An obvious case in point was the escape of Capt. Nicanor Faeldon who pretended that he was just going to buy fruits. When Faeldon escaped, what punishment, if any, was given to those who were supposed to guard him? After the four prisoners escaped, the consequences have been negligible: The commander of Fort Bonifacio has been relieved, yes, but what about Esperon? Shouldn't he assume some sort of command responsibility, particularly since the military appears to have developed a severe inability to keep prisoners behind bars or even to stop Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes from conveniently and dramatically issuing a challenge to the public hours before the escape?

Esperon may have reasons for suspecting complicity on the part of Pulido. However, he seems inclined to turn a blind eye to the possibility the escape was an inside job. Such an attitude smacks of a whitewash. Could it be that the military top brass is afraid of further alienating lower-ranking officers and enlisted men? Or are they becoming uncertain about their ability to command the troops?

The Romans used to ask who would guard the guardians. Now that the guardians have demonstrated their inability to do their jobs, can they be trusted to investigate themselves? After all, the country is still waiting for the Mayuga report on the involvement of top military officials, Esperon among them, in alleged fraud during the May 2004 elections, isn't it?



As some of our readers see it

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

TIME TO GIVE OUR READERS A CHANCE TO be heard, especially those who have been subjects of previous columns. Here are a few of them:

In the Jan. 16 column, following up a report that it was Speaker Jose de Venecia who was the mastermind behind the No-El provision of the Constitution drafted by the Consultative Commission, I wrote that it was former Rep. Gerry Espina of Biliran who authored it. "Whether or not it was JDV who prodded Espina to make the proposal, only the two of them know," I said.

Espina sent a letter admitting that he indeed was the proponent of the No-El provision, but adding that no one prodded him, "not even JDV."

"About three years ago, when I was still a congressman," he wrote, "the same proposal was made by me in a speech on the floor of Congress. Hence, when I proposed it in the ConCom, it was not something new. Congressmen who were with me at the time can attest to this."

Espina also confirmed that although the No-El provision was included in the draft charter, he eventually voted against the proposed revised charter. "I believe that both the parliamentary system and federalism would be more destructive of our goals for development than No-El," he said. "So, yes, no one else is to blame for No-El but Gerry Espina. But believe me, I had no immoral or evil intent."

* * *

In the same column, I wrote that the front man of the local government units in pushing Charter change was Gov. Ben Evardone of Eastern Samar, but he didn't seem to realize that when the parliamentary/federal system of government they were pushing materialized, his own province and other poor provinces would be the hardest hit. In a federal government, I pointed out, local government units will have to fend for themselves and can't rely on financial help from the national government. While a few LGUs can support themselves, many more poor provinces, cities and municipalities cannot and will probably end up taxing their constituents beyond their capacity to pay.

Evardone sent a text message saying his colleagues in the Governors League have changed their minds and are now against federalism.

"We are for more local autonomy and decentralization," he said, "not federalism. On No-El, my proposal is to submit it to the people as a separate question in the plebiscite."

* * *

Last Jan. 4, I wrote a column on the conflicting proposals for a new Compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL) insurance scheme for private motor vehicles, following a Senate exposé on the corruption and loss to the government of taxes under the present system. The Insurance Commission and the private insurance companies proposed a "clearing house" for all CTPL policies. The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) proposed that it be the insurer and then it would reinsure the policies with reputable insurance companies.

Some time later, I wrote about a third proposal to organize a consortium of all insurance companies interested in the CTPL business. The consortium would act as the insurer for all the companies, accept all payments and issue all the policies. Then it would divide equally the premiums paid to all the members of the consortium after remitting the taxes to the government. Payment of claims will also be divided equally among them.

Benjamin Santos, former commissioner of the Insurance Commission (IC), sent a letter proposing still another scheme that basically would also be a consortium with computers linked to members and to government agencies concerned. He criticized the "bank clearing house" and GSIS proposals.

The "clearing house" espoused by new Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo "is not only cumbersome for licensing purposes since the procedures will call for a bank stop before the process is completed," Santos wrote. "It also miserably fails to provide credibility to attaining the objective of public protection since it fosters the continued issuance of CTPL policies by single insurance companies."

The "clearing house" concept, he added, is just another name for the PIRA model which has already been found to be deficient.

How about the GSIS model? In theory, it is the most practical because vehicle insurance premiums would be collected at the same time as the registration fees, said Santos. "However, it suffers from a fatal flaw: it is illegal for the GSIS to sell insurance to private parties, let alone to private vehicle owners. No amount of reinsuring the business to the insurance industry can make it legal. Furthermore, the GSIS cannot legally collect taxes. And knowing the GSIS record, how can anyone expect that payment of insurance claims would be handled in an honest, timely and efficient manner?"

So how does the Insurance Consortium model compare with the others? This is Santos' answer:

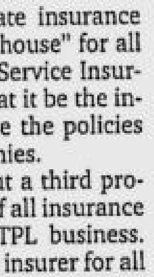
"The consortium will be made up of legitimate, licensed insurance companies managed by an independently owned IT company to ensure (a) timely and correct payment of claims and taxes and (b) submission of reportorial requirements to all government agencies concerned. The consortium concept is simple: responsibilities and accountabilities are clear and enforceable. No gobbledygook about insurance technicalities and legalese."

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: If the Constitution is to be amended, this provision should be included: "Members of Parliament should have two terms—one in the legislature and another one in jail."

Patriotic whitewater rafting at Chico River

Passion for Reason



Raul C. Pangalangan

WHEN I WAS IN COLLEGE IN DILIMAN, I WAS told that the best way to serve the people was to take to the hills and wage the struggle in the Cordilleras and the Sierra Madre. Now, decades later, I realize that taking to the hills can mean different things at different times, and that the war can be won on many fronts.

Go whitewater rafting on the mighty Chico River. Go local in your family vacations. Go help the local tourism industry. Be patriotic. Shun San Francisco. Shun Hong Kong. Shun Bangkok. Tuguegarao, here we come.

Whitewater rafting is one of those adventure vacations I had longed to do. More than a year ago, I decided to take the plunge, literally, and took my wife and kids on a 50-minute flight to Tuguegarao, not knowing what to expect. All I had was the cell-phone number of Anton Carag, charismatic mover and shaker of whitewater rafting at Chico since 1998. (He can be reached via e-mail at aepi@whitewater.ph or anton@whitewater.ph). He is one of the pioneers of whitewater rafting in the Philippines.

We went kayaking on Pinacanauan River, which is fed by the Sierra Madre mountain range. My wife, a certified non-athlete, dared the rapids and prevailed. My youngest son, then in fifth grade, turned out to be the best kayaker in the group, who mastered the waves into which I would tip over and learn for myself what it feels to be in a washing-machine's spin cycle.

The next day, we went whitewater rafting on Chico, whose headwaters come from Mt. Data and which flows down through the Cordillera mountains in Mountain Province and Kalinga. Anton briefed us fully about safety, and we wore vests and helmets for the ride.

We explored the Callao Cave which has its own "chapel" inside and a natural skylight. We went spelunking through the darker, tighter Sierra cave (not recommended for claustrophobes) with its stalactite and stalagmite formations. At sundown, we viewed the circadian flight of bats, their daily ritual as they fly out of their caves in ballet-like grace as they scour the hillsides for food. (They are insect-eating bats—delicious, according to the locals, though, I must say, I didn't try them.)

But whitewater rafting, for Filipinos, should also be eye-opening. We saw images of nature that city slickers get to see only on the National Geographic channel, and discovered the true beauty of the Philippines that, strangely enough, mainly foreigners appreciate. The waters were crystal clear, and you could see the river bottom at some sections. I felt, for the first time in my life, the power of a river's current and understood, intuitively this time, Max Ehrmann's verse: "Beneath the dashing, noisy waves run the silent waters that give the tide its course."

But I also saw families living in isolated villages accessible only by boat, and asked myself even more painfully why my nation's wealth is amassed in Manila, while other countrymen eke out a living in almost medieval conditions.

Whitewater rafting is part of the new adventure- and eco-tourism that the Philippines can offer to tourists. For too long, we have taken for granted our natural resources and failed to make the most of our cheap labor, except in the form of migrant workers to be exported to more affluent economies. As the "Survivor" TV series demonstrates, especially that season they spent in the Sulu Sea, there are experiences that people would fight for to remain on the island.

Adventure tourism brings new jobs and new businesses. Our river guides were all natives of the neighboring communities. On the Pinacanauan river, they were local Cagayanos from Peñablanca. On Chico, they came from the seven different Kalinga barangays we traversed on the trip downstream. They knew the river like the back of their hand and, I suppose, wondered why the city folk oohed and aaahed as each twist and turn of the river revealed another of nature's magnificence, in the eroded rocks, the green cliffs, or that sudden glimpse of the blue skies sandwiched between hilltops.

The government's tourism program is one bright exception to the somber mood of the times. Its admirable initiative in medical tourism, for instance, should build upon our strength, the well-trained Filipino health professional who can match his or her foreign counterparts. It should stem the outflow of Filipino doctors and nurses, and help them earn like expats in their own country. It may yet attract fresh capital into our health industry, and bring state-of-the-art technology to our hospitals. And it is my hope that the globalization of health care in Manila will foster First-World standards of professionalism and safeguards against medical malpractice.

I have also read about the government's initiatives in spa tourism. It certainly makes sense. Each time I arrive at Schipol airport in Amsterdam and I see a chair massage offered at some $20 for the first 10 minutes, I start computing: 13 hours ago, in Manila, I could have gotten two hours at the spa for that amount. Spa tourism builds upon our comparative advantage in cheap labor, and should elevate our local *hilot* centers into the Esalen of Asia, without the exorbitant hourly rates.

As I paddled my boat and relished the view while trying my best to stay alive, I was haunted by the thought that all the philosophizing I do in Diliman seems far removed from the reality of the people's lives along the Chico river. I recalled Pocahontas singing, "Can you sing with all the voices of the mountain, can you paint with all the colors of the wind? … We are all connected to each other, in a circle, in a hope, that never ends."

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

US Embassy calls De Castro 'illiterate'

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE INQUIRER ON THURSDAY PUBLISHED excerpts from classified documents containing the US Embassy assessments of political developments in the Philippines in 2005 which were critical of the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo. These excerpts are said to be part of the 101 documents pilfered from classified files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation by Leandro Aragoncillo, a former US Marine of Filipino extraction, and leaked to former Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, a close associate of former Philippine National Police Director General (now Senator) Panfilo Lacson. The stolen documents are said to have been sent to opposition leaders, among them, former President Joseph Estrada, Lacson, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Rep. Roilo Golez.

The US Justice Department has charged Aragoncillo with "knowingly communicating classified information by a government employee to an agent or representative of a foreign country." Aquino was charged with allegedly conspiring with Aragoncillo in passing US intelligence secrets to past and present Philippine officials in an effort to destabilize the Arroyo regime.

The INQUIRER story was based on an Associated Press report and repeated as well as added details to a series of reports it ran last October revealing diplomatic dispatches purportedly received from unnamed US Embassy sources.

Although Estrada, Pimentel, Lacson and Golez have acknowledged that they had received e-mail from either Aquino or Aragoncillo, they have dismissed the leak as containing material widely known to the Filipino public. Lacson said the e-mail from Aquino contained articles about the "Philippine situation" and "were largely news that we read in our local media."

The contents of the secret US Embassy analyses, judging from the published reports, abundantly lift from published news stories and do not reveal state secrets that were not known in the very porous rumor mills of Manila. But that's not the point. The case of spying against Aragoncillo and Aquino is built on evidence of alleged downloading of classified material from computers at the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.

What is striking is the AP report on Vice President Noli de Castro and the US Embassy assessment of President Arroyo. A classified embassy report dated July 2005 described the President as "a weak reactive leader whose technocratic leanings, oligarchical upbringing, overbearing personal style and inability to connect with ordinary Filipinos have kept her popularity ratings low in a country that reveres warm and outgoing personalities." It added that her election "was tainted by credible rumors of vote-buying, leaving her legitimacy once again in question, following her rise to power amid rumors of corruption and vote-buying."

This assessment is basically accurate. Estrada, Lacson et al. could not have learned anything new from this assessment.

The other intriguing element is the assessment of De Castro's fitness for the presidency. A classified FBI intelligence assessment dated July 2005 disparaged him: "We inquired about the biography of Rudy Giuliani (mayor of New York during the Sept. 11, 2001 bombing attack) sitting atop a small stack of books on De Castro's desk and he said it was a gift and he hadn't read it … There is no indication De Castro has much knowledge or interest in foreign policy issues."

That does not make De Castro any worse than most Philippine officials in their familiarity with foreign policy issues. What Filipino would have been enormously excited about Giuliani's biography, when most of them are more interested in reading Internet "blogs"? True, Giuliani emerged as a folk hero and was acclaimed by Time magazine as its "Person of the Year 2001" for his heroic intervention to put New York back on its feet after the devastating attack. But De Castro's indifference to Giuliani's biography should not be considered as a test of his literacy.

Still his reply must have affronted the interviewer from the US Embassy. At the time, nothing was more important to the United States than 9/11. How its allies came to the side of the wounded United States was the primary concern of US policy and the test of friendship. Thus, the importance of knowing Giuliani.

But last year, when the US Embassy was assessing the survival prospects of the Arroyo administration, which was being besieged by a crisis of legitimacy, there were more engaging and exciting books than Giuliani's biography. Among these are such more compelling books and instructive to Filipinos as the raids of Coxinga, the Japanese corsair in the service of the Ming dynasty, on the Philippines and the new biographies of Attila the Hun, Genghis Khan and Rene Descartes ("The Life of Rene Descartes and His Place in His Times").

To recall, Descartes is the father of famous French Cartesian logic that helps us understand the brilliant opposition by President Jacques Chirac's Prime Minister Dominque de Villepin at the UN Security Council to the US plan to invade Iraq as well as the dynamics of France's independent foreign policy.

The US Embassy dossiers are useful documents for study because they reveal more about US priorities and foreign policy biases more than the weaknesses of the Philippine political system and the fragility of the Arroyo regime. It is not a disgrace not to read Giuliani's biography.

What's more significant is that the stolen FBI files were sent to opposition leaders. The choice of recipients appears to have been motivated by a desire to inform them of the attitude of the US government toward the Arroyo regime and prod them to mount a challenge to her regime.

Comelec officials should be charged

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT AS LAWYER HARRY Roque pointed out at a forum on electoral reform sponsored by the Black and White Movement Wednesday, we are now observing the second anniversary of the Supreme Court decision on the "Comelec Modernization Scam," as the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee Report on the same matter is entitled.

Last Jan. 13, 2004, the Supreme Court nullified the contract between the Comelec and the supplier of Automated Counting Machines, decrying what it called the "illegal and abusive acts of the Comelec" in wasting P2.3 billion of public funds in ill-advised and anomalous transactions that have only derailed the entire computerization and modernization of our electoral system.

In its decision, the Court directed the Office of the Ombudsman to "determine the criminal liability, if any, of the public officials (and conspiring private individuals, if any)" involved in the deal. As a news report in yesterday's INQUIRER reveals, former Ombudsman Sonny Marcelo was about ready to sign the report that would have forced the Comelec officials to be tried before the Sandiganbayan but First Gentleman Mike Arroyo talked him out of it. This was the reason, said former Senate President Jovito Salonga who claimed he heard it from Marcelo himself, that Marcelo chose to resign his post before his term was over. Salonga urged the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines (ITFP), which filed the suit against the Comelec before the Supreme Court, to submit a motion to declare the Ombudsman in contempt of the Supreme Court in light of its inaction on the Court's recommendation.

At the same time, there's an ongoing signature campaign (including an online petition) to compel the Comelec commissioners to voluntarily resign from the poll body, with the organizers managing to draw over 800 signatories.

* * *

THE TROUBLE with calling for their resignation, though, is that it's all up to the commissioners to accede to the people's wishes—or not. And if the history of office-holders in this country is anything to go by, we better not hold our breath until they decide to do the right and honorable thing.

As members of a constitutionally protected body, so the common perception goes, the only way Comelec commissioners can be ousted is by the long, tedious and politically charged route of impeachment.

Roque, in his talk at the forum, begged to disagree with "conventional wisdom," though. "The Constitution does not provide immunity from suits (to all) impeachable officers," he asserted, "but only to the President." Going through local jurisprudence, Roque said he found a recent Supreme Court ruling on an administrative case involving a Comelec commissioner that stated that even an impeachable official can and should be tried for an offense. Thus, the Ombudsman cannot invoke immunity from suit as grounds for inaction on the Supreme Court's order.

Is impeachment the only way to remove a Comelec commissioner? Roque asked, referring to the title of the forum. "The answer is no. You can charge the Comelec commissioners criminally for their role in this anomaly and they will automatically be meted out a 90-day suspension."

* * *

WHY the need to rid the Comelec of its present board of commissioners, starting with Chair Benjamin Abalos?

Because, said Vicente Romano III of the Black and White Movement, "even if President GMA and Noli de Castro resign tomorrow, the country would still be in a lot of trouble if we hold elections with the present Comelec leadership in place."

The aim of the Black and White Movement, a broad coalition of civil society groups, Romano explained, was not just "GMA/Noli Resign," but meaningful reform in Philippine government and society. "Electoral reform is a crucial element," Romano added, and clean, honest and credible elections will not be possible unless the officials heading the poll body are themselves reputable and honest.

Gus Lagman, who was president of the ITFP at the time it filed suit with the Supreme Court, puts it more succinctly: "Electoral reform won't happen unless we kick out the Comelec commissioners first."

The goal of the petitioner—and the signatories—even goes beyond just indicting and punishing the guilty commissioners, they say. "Corruption thrives in this country because we allow it," says Lagman. If the commissioners manage to retire with their names and reputations intact—and still claiming retirement pay from the people they scammed—then it sends a sad, familiar message to all Filipinos: Corruption pays and, worse, is rarely, if ever punished.

* * *

A QUICK glance at the comments of Filipinos here and abroad who signed the online petition indicates the extent of public anger and disgust at the way our government and society tolerates the corrupt and the criminal.

"D" declares: "Not only resignation, but the accused should be brought to justice and made to answer for their faults—if found guilty—appropriate punishment should be applied. We should not be complacent after the petition letter … we are asking for justice and I believe resignation is not justice for the billions of squandered funds that I sweated out."

"Why resign?" "J" demands. "If we can punish them from doing such disgrace to our country, resignation of a public official due to corruption is not enough!!! We should impose a greater disciplinary action on those involved, but how can we? The legislature won't think of such a bill because they will be affected to a much greater degree!"

"M" has a much more radical proposition: "Ask them to commit seppuku (ritual suicide) to bring back dignity and honor to a shamed institution."

IDs and disguises

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

LOOKING AT THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE four Oakwood mutineers on TV and in the newspapers made me realize how easy it is to track down people in this day and age. That is, if the authorities really want to track them down.

We have come a long way in terms of identification from the 19th century, when all one carried around was a piece of paper, actually a receipt for payment of residence tax known then and now as a *cedula*. When Andres Bonifacio and fellow Katipuneros tore up their *cedulas* as a symbolic act of defiance of Spanish colonial rule, they were also getting rid of a way for the authorities to identify them when stopped at checkpoints.

At the tail-end of the Spanish period, photography was available in the Philippines, but it was used mainly for social or sentimental reasons. Photographs were not used for IDs or even "Wanted" posters. Photographs were costly, and only people like Jose Rizal had photographs from his student days to his execution, so we can actually see him growing up.

On the other hand, Andres Bonifacio only has one extant and blurred photograph. In this historic mug shot, the hero of the masses is not wearing the iconographic *camisa de chino* and screaming red paints. Bonifacio's only photograph has him in a dark suit, wearing a necktie and, depending on the retouched photograph you are looking at, a carnation on his lapel.

A photograph was one way to be identified and arrested, so Paciano Rizal refused to be photographed during his lifetime. We only have one stolen and candid shot of him in his old age. When he died and could not complain or resist, they took a handful of shots of him lying in his coffin.

Without a photograph, it was easier to put on a disguise or claim you were someone else. In 1901, when American troops were trying to capture Gen. Miguel Malvar, they had no photograph nor cartographic sketch to disseminate, so this description was given:

"Complexion rather dark, weighs about 145 pounds, about 5 feet 2 inches in height, short and heavy set, with unusually thick and heavy jawbones, hair black with perhaps a few gray hairs, about 40 or 42 years old, wears a gold ring with a stone set on the third finger of the left hand, feet a little broad, wears a 5 or 6 shoe (when wearing shoes), has well-shaped hands.

"His hair is liable to grow long in front of his ears, giving an appearance of side whiskers. He usually wears a small black moustache, and while conversing with anyone is liable to bat his eyes in a peculiar way.

"Going about the country with an Indian shirt and trousers cut off or rolled up to the knee (to avoid detection). If captured will affect being very simple, inoffensive, and ignorant native who knows nothing, and will give a wrong name. Mouth large, nose ordinary, but slightly resembling Philippine nose, eyes black. Sometimes chews betel nut."

Despite this detailed description, Malvar eluded the enemy for a long time, because Filipinos would not rat on him.

The 19th-century *cedula* contained the person's name, address, and profession. People still have *cedulas* in the 21st century but we don't use them as identification because we have so many alternative photo IDs today: school and office IDs, SSS/GSIS ID, driver's license, passport, voter's ID, senior citizen's ID and much more. All this can be confused and confusing, but the only consolation is that private security guards get their sense of being from our IDs. I received a text on different mottos of the US armed forces: "No guts, no glory" (Air Force); "No retreat, no surrender" (Marines); and "No pain, no gain" (Army). Would you believe Philippine security guards have their own motto? "No ID. No entry."

Old passports used to ask about distinguishing features on a face. But that was before advances in dermatology and cosmetic surgery. When I asked my dermatologist if she would recommend removing the President's mole, her reply was that it was her most distinguishing feature and would require changing the description on her passport and other documents.

Alejandro Roces has some funny anecdotes about disguises during the martial law regime. Charito Planas hid behind a Muslim veil. Heherson Alvarez got a passport using a fake name and Roces tells us how:

"I used to have this [small, one-room] office [with a bathroom]. One day, Sonny Alvarez came in with a *bakla* and asked that they be allowed to use my bathroom. So I said yes. I was a bit startled when the two of them entered the bathroom together, but I didn't mind until they didn't come out after a while. They stayed there for about three hours! My God, what were they doing there? I knocked and asked, 'What are you doing there?' The door swung open and Sonny came out with false teeth and a contorted face. The *bakla* happened to be one of Cecile's makeup artists at Peta. My God, you should have seen Sonny—he was so ugly. After this, they had to rush to have his photograph taken with that ugly face so it could be put on his passport! Oh, I wish they had kept that passport with that face. It was so ugly Sonny got through the Immigration people at the Manila International Airport."

Identification is very advanced these days. We have finger-printing, we have photos of faces, we even have high-resolution photos of the retina, and of course the ultimate in identification: a person's DNA. Disguises won't work anymore.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

What could be

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT MICHELLE BACHELET had won Chile's presidential elections last Sunday, crowds poured into the streets in jubilation, cheering as she asked them rhetorically: "Who would have imagined 5, 10, 15 years ago, that Chile would elect a woman president?"

We Filipinos might respond by pointing out, hey, we've had two women presidents since 1986.

But let's look more closely at the woman Chile just elected. Bachelet's father was killed by the Chilean military under Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship. Her boyfriend was one of the many political dissidents who were arrested, never to be seen again. She and her mother were both arrested and tortured, and then exiled. They were later able to return to Chile, where Bachelet joined the anti-dictatorship movement that eventually brought down Pinochet. Trained as a pediatric surgeon, she served the new government as health minister and then defense secretary, a first in Latin America.

Even more amazing are details from her personal life: Bachelet is a Socialist, a single mother of three and an agnostic.

The more I thought about Chile's last election, the more I realized there's more to all this than an issue of gender. As we debate now on our system of government, we should be asking ourselves if the problem is the form of government, or the social and cultural conditions that either allow or prevent us from making democratic governance a reality.

A common past

The Philippines shares much of a common past with Chile and Latin America, influenced by Spanish (and for Brazil, Portuguese) colonizers: an absolutist authoritarian view of the world, a feudal system marked by great economic inequity and politics that alternates between repression and patronage. We also share the Latin machismo and its problems, from the system of *queridas* (mistresses) to violence against women. Until 2004, Chile was one of only three countries in the world without divorce. (If you're wondering, today there are only two: Malta and the Philippines.)

Certainly, there are important differences between Latin America and the Philippines. The Spanish mestizos in Latin America revolted against Mother Spain early in the 19th century, creating one independent country after another. Some did quite well; Argentina was one of the most economically advanced nations in the world at one time. Latin American countries, free of Spain, also allowed more liberal political and social philosophies to emerge.

The 20th century saw Latin American countries degenerating into banana republics, where wealthy families spent all their time plotting against each other than on governance. The despots' power often depended on their ties with US multinational companies and the US government. Washington interfered constantly with local politics, supporting the most pro-American politicians and ousting the less cooperative.

Despite these problems, progressive politics flourished in many of the countries. In 1968, Chile elected a Socialist, Salvador Allende, as president. Then the United States launched a destabilization campaign that culminated in a military coup on Sept. 11, 1973. Allende was killed when the military bombed the presidential palace. Until 1990, Chile suffered in the hands of Pinochet and his butchers, with some 3,000 Chileans losing their lives.

After the dictators

We got rid of Marcos in 1986, while the Chileans ousted Pinochet in 1990. Since then, Chile has restored democracy. In the Philippines, we only think we did.

Chile had strong democratic Left parties, including Allende's Socialist Party, that led the anti-dictatorship struggle. After they won in 1990, they formed a center-left political coalition, Concertacion, that has led Chile through all the post-Pinochet years.

Under Concertacion, Chile stabilized, politically and economically. Unlike us, the Chileans were unrelenting in bringing Pinochet to justice. Although the dictator went into exile in Europe, he was eventually extradited and is now under house arrest in Chile. It pursued free-market economics and respected political processes. Concertacion also developed their social welfare programs and Bachelet's victory came with pledges to strengthen these programs.

And the Philippines? We keep electing right-wing politicians who won't let go of power. We ape America with its dog-eat-dog capitalism while tossing loose change to the poor. We would never elect someone like Bachelet because we still want to pretend we are a morally upright people, pro-family and pro-life, even as we send children out to beg in the streets, export their parents as cheap labor, allow foreign military troops to conduct war exercises on our soil and rape our women.

Chile is macho country, but Bachelet rode to victory on both women's and men's votes. When you analyze what happened, you realize Chileans voted for her not [illegible] because she was a woman but also because she stood fo[illegible] political leadership that had governed well.

Her own person

At the individual level, Bachelet was voted into the highest office because she was her own person. The newspapers report that she rarely talked about her own trials under Pinochet and her loss of her father or boyfriend. She was Michelle Bachelet, not the wife or daughter of some other powerful politician as had been the case with other women heads of state in Latin America and the Philippines.

When senators interviewed her to see if she'd make a good presidential candidate, they asked what she was looking for in life. She was said to have answered: "To walk along the beach holding the hand of my lover." In a media interview, she talked about combining parenting with politics by describing what she does when her son calls, needing wax paper: "It is not that you cancel your meeting, but after your day, you go to the supermarket to buy the supplies."

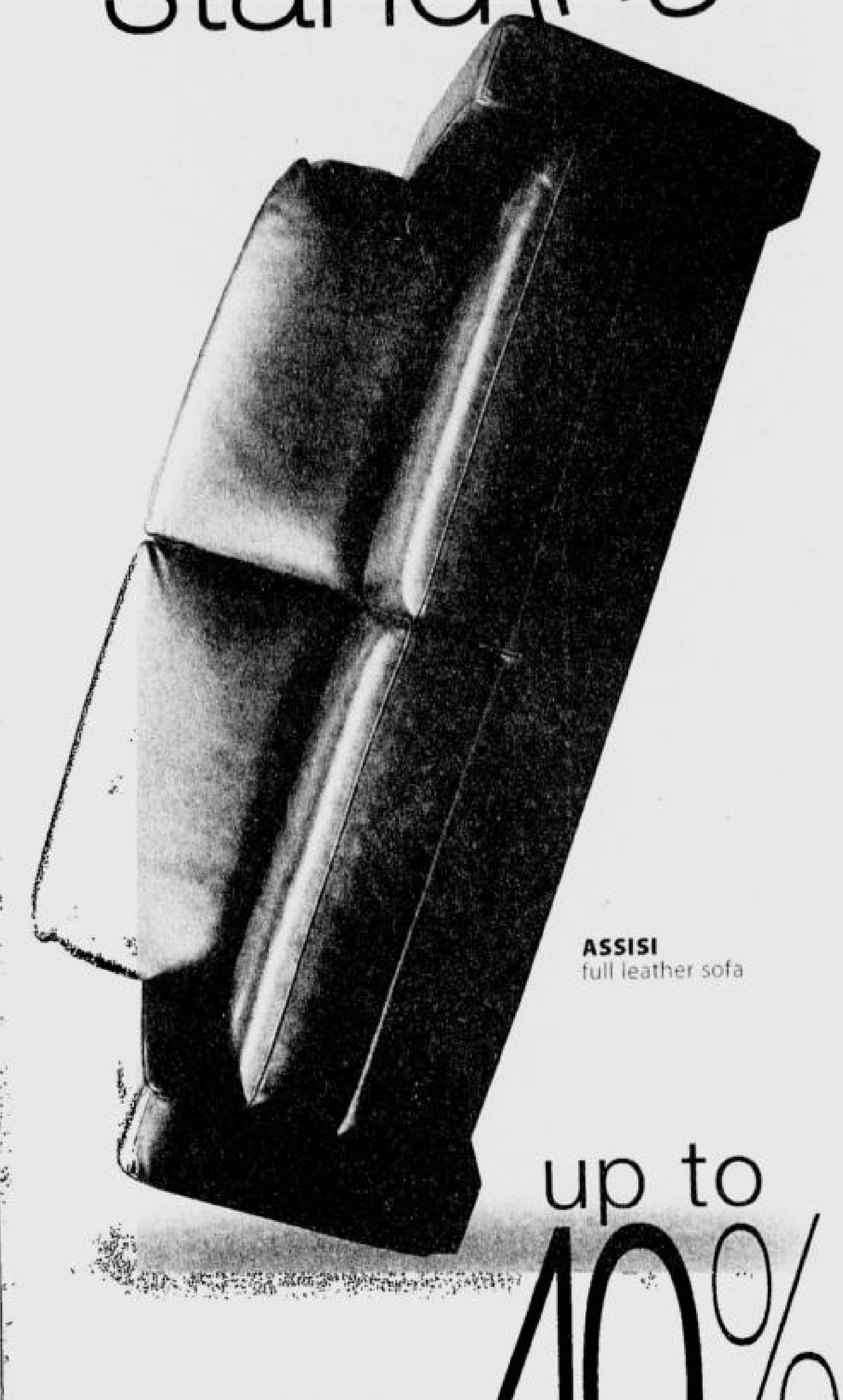
Show-biz politics? Maybe. But then our President tries hard as well to be show biz and her answers could never come close to Bachelet's.

Again, this is not just a gender issue. Chile tells us that against all odds, you can build a political system where voters recognize performance, rather than personalities, where women and men of substance can still win over traditional and moneyed politicians (Bachelet's main rival was a billionaire, the owner of LAN, Chile's largest airline).

The quote I gave at the beginning of this column was incomplete. After exulting over Chile's election of a woman president, Bachelet went on to declare: "We have shown a country can be prosperous without losing its soul."

For Chileans, that statement was an affirmation of years of building a democracy. For Filipinos, especially for our economist of a President, that statement could be a challenge to be bolder as we imagine what could have been and what could still be.

down to the last item standing*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Justice for judges

WE, THE MEMBERS OF THE LAS Piñas City Bar Association, join all peace-loving Filipinos in condemning the recent murder of Pasay City RTC Judge Henrick Gingoyon. There can be no better example of the criminal elements' disregard of order in our society than the killing of people who administer and dispense justice in our land.

We, therefore, urge the government to speed up the investigation of all unsolved killings of judges and lawyers, and to bring posthaste the perpetrators, most especially the masterminds of these dastardly crimes, before the bar of justice. In this regard, we strongly support the idea of Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban for the creation of a special unit in the Department of Justice that will focus on solving such murders.

Finally, we ask our fellow members of the Philippine Bar to unite so that our collective voice will be heard, loud and clear, in defense of the rule of law and administration of justice.

—JESUS S. SIRIOS,
PRO, Las Piñas City Bar Association,
1 Apollo 4, Moonwalk Village,
Las Piñas City

Inquirer's uplifting stories

I THANK THE INQUIRER FOR RUNning uplifting stories on its front page. I've been avoiding reading newspapers lately, especially because I usually have the opportunity to read only during mealtimes. The predictable fare of crimes, tragedies, corruption scandals and political bickerings just turns my stomach.

But I was pleasantly surprised by stories like "How a '*kaingin*' farmer became 'Dr. Luis'." (PDI, 1/5/06) It brought tears to my eyes. Stories like this renew the Filipino's faith in our nation and do much more good than a thousand reports on what this politician says about that other politician.

I hope to see more stories like this because being with groups like Ivolunteer, Hands on Manila, Haribon, WWF and Birdwatch Philippines, I see people who are making a difference in our country every day, and I always wish that more people would see what a lot of good people are doing with great success.

I—like many others, I'm sure—am positively affected by such people whose selfless deeds, I think, inspire us to do whatever we can, wherever we are, with whatever we have. Once again, a big thank you to the INQUIRER!

—CHRISTINA ALEJANDRO,
tina@papemelroti.com

Eight VAT charges in electric bill

I JUST RECEIVED MY MERALCO billing for Dec. 15, 2005, and counted eight value-added tax billings:

VAT for general charge, VAT for trans charge,. VAT for SL charge (whatever that is!), VAT Power Act Rdn, VAT for Dist & Subs (again, whatever that is), VAT Sales, VAT zero rated, VAT Exempt.

VHAT about VAT for farting?

From a 70-year-old retiree getting P2,000 from the Social Security System, enough to pay his Meralco billings and its VATs.

—PABLO CALICANTO,
pablicanto72@yahoo.com

SC committed to four 'ins'

IN HIS LETTER TO THE EDITOR, Amado Gat Inciong (PDI, 1/14/06) asks "the Panganiban Court [to] make public exactly how much in loans and in grants the Davide Court got."

The answer is simple: the Supreme Court never got any loans or grants directly from international or foreign funding agencies. It was the Philippine government, through the Department of Finance, that secured these funds, which were in turn allocated for judicial projects.

Furthermore, most of these funds were used precisely to assure the independence of the judiciary. International institutions, like the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the European Union, are interested in independent and credible judiciaries in the whole world, not only in our country, because they believe that their primary mission of promoting economic development cannot be attained without independent and credible judiciaries.

In any event, Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban is committed to a judiciary that is dedicated to the rule of law and characterized by four "ins": independence, integrity, intelligence and industry under an environment of transparency. He will not allow judicial independence to be compromised in any manner.

—ISMAEL G. KHAN JR.,
deputy court administrator and chief
Public Information Office,
Supreme Court,
Padre Faura Street, Manila

Uncharted waters

Those who see hope for the nation in a change to parliamentary government seem to be far outnumbered by those who see it as a holding pattern for the Arroyo administration, if our readers' reactions are any indication. The Council of State meeting was perceived as a Palace ploy. Readers have also cast a wary eye on former President Fidel Ramos' interventions, and two suggested that Filipino political culture itself is responsible for the political impasse.

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

THE CRISIS THAT HAS HOUNDED the Arroyo administration can only be blamed on the President herself. She should have thought better [about] being catapulted to the presidency by people power without the benefit of a popular vote.

The moment she decided to play with the people's mandate, she entered uncharted waters. In the final analysis, God will still determine the length of her stay.

Resigning [at] the earliest possible time is the only option left [to] her. If she doesn't do that she will only be prolonging the agony of ultimate defeat.—**Teresito Custodia, Sacramento, California, USA**

* * *

A Council of State meeting to discuss pressing problems of national interest [is] nothing but psychological warfare. The President and her advisers are trying their best to deflect the people's demand for her to resign.

Former President Corazon Aquino is correct: The moral issue is the No. 1 problem of the country. Without morality, the country will remain in the snake pit.

Please, Madam President, set a good example for future leaders of our country. Be like the leaders of Japan and South Korea who resign once there is a perception or allegation of moral indiscretion.—**Roj Clemente, M8Consult@aol.com**

* * *

It's really annoying to hear former President Ramos trying to bully President Arroyo to quit by 2007. [By] what authority [does he] say [those] impolite words to the highest official of the land? Remember he's retired, and all affixes and suffixes to his name are also retired. He's an ordinary citizen like us.

To be [at] the forefront of battle is like wearing double-knit pants in the age of Levi's *maong*.—**Hedjib Edoria, jun@cvc4health.com**

* * *

Whenever a crisis occurs, politicians always refer to the Constitution, not for guidance but to see what's wrong [with it]. It happened to the 1935, 1973 and 1986 Constitutions, aside from the first fundamental laws in 1899, [with their] provisions being amended many times to suit the powers that be.

As the administration of Ms Arroyo [is] being rocked with scandal, again the Constitution is being changed to suit the powerful.

The Constitution was adopted by a sovereign power and can be amended only by that power: the Filipino people. [It's not] the Constitution [that] needs to be changed but the elected officials. Cha-cha is for dancers, not nation-builders.—**Godo Arago, jun@cvc4health.com**

* * *

We must not blame GMA but the system and culture of Filipinos created by the politicians and not her alone.

[Shifting] to a parliamentary system offers hope for the lowly peasant with political leadership potential to become a future good prime minister and/or president, and inspire moral change to reform the political and social and economic life of the country.—**Marcial Agoncillo, maragol-weslabsyou@yahoo.com**

* * *

We don't need a change of government. What we need is a change of heart [among] the people running the country so that they will truly work for [its] betterment.

We all should be vigilant and stop corrupting the system ourselves. We all have a hand in building whatever our country is today.—**Nicky Reyes, California, USA**

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Across the NATION

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Telegrams face extinction in Cordillera areas

BAGUIO CITY—"SEND ME money. No money, no honey."

This sample message for telegram transmission posted in a telecommunications office here will soon belong to its memorabilia along with the single sideband machine used for Morse coding.

GOODBYE MGA HONEY!
TELEGRAM
ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Clients in the Cordillera will stop hearing the "bleep, bleep" sound of Morse coding as the machines will be phased out this year to give way to modern e-centers, according to Wilfred Quines, acting chief for administration and finance of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) in the Cordillera.

Quines said despite the arrival of short messaging system (SMS) on cellular phones and Internet, telegraph technology remains relevant.

But not all places in the hinterlands can accommodate computer and cellular phone technology because of their terrain.

"But we are doing a paradigm shift in our communications system this year. Gradually, we are phasing out the telegraph stations to install e-centers or Internet cafés in every town in the region," he said.

He said the e-centers will alter the telegraph stations in the Cordillera. The only problem in installing the new system is connecting this through cable or satellite, he added.

However, communications officials are thinking of using Wi-Fi or e-satellite.

Ideally, each town is to have three units of computer in e-centers where all modes of communication are going to be centralized, like in the telegraph system.

"We are now moving on to that direction. We have already requested computers from our CICT. This is not only going to happen in the Cordillera but in the whole country. Ilocos and Cagayan regions have already started modernizing (their) systems," Quines said.

There are 59 telegraph stations that have single sideband machines in Cordillera such as those in Mt. Province, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga and Abra and Baguio City.

Although the technology is old, the single sideband machines are easiest to maintain since parts are still available in the local market, Quines said.

He said they closed 10 stations last year due to the financial crisis. These stations only earned P500 or less in a month, he said. *Desiree Caluza*

Photojournalist's killer draws death sentence

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A CEBU REGIONAL TRIAL COURT yesterday imposed the death sentence on an alleged drug pusher for killing local photojournalist Allan Dizon in 2004.

Judge Ireneo Gako Jr. of RTC Branch 5 found Edgar Belandres, of Barangay Lorega, guilty of murder based on the testimony of three witnesses—two jeepney drivers and a sidewalk vendor—who identified him as the gunman.

Dizon, 30, a reporter-photographer of The Freeman daily and its sister publication in Cebuano Banat News, was killed near SM City Cebu on Nov. 27, 2004, at 6:59 p.m.

The victim was standing on the sidewalk near a car wash outlet when the lone assailant shot him three times in the head, chest and back. He died an hour later at the Cebu City Medical Center.

"Señor Sto. Niño, *salamat!* (Thank you)" cried Dizon's widow Amelina after the verdict was read.

"I am very happy with the decision... At last justice has been served to Allan," she later told reporters.

A week after his death, members of a task force assigned to handle the Dizon murder case arrested Belandes, a neighbor and friend of the victim's, in Lorega-San Miguel, where they grew up.

Police claimed that Belandres, allegedly a notorious drug pusher operating in the community, got mad at Dizon for alerting the police about his illegal activities.

Police believed that Belandres was the same person identified only as "DD" who sent a text message to Dizon before he was killed. DD referred to Dodong Ensong, nickname of Belandres, police said.

Based on the text message, DD asked Dizon to go to the car wash outlet.

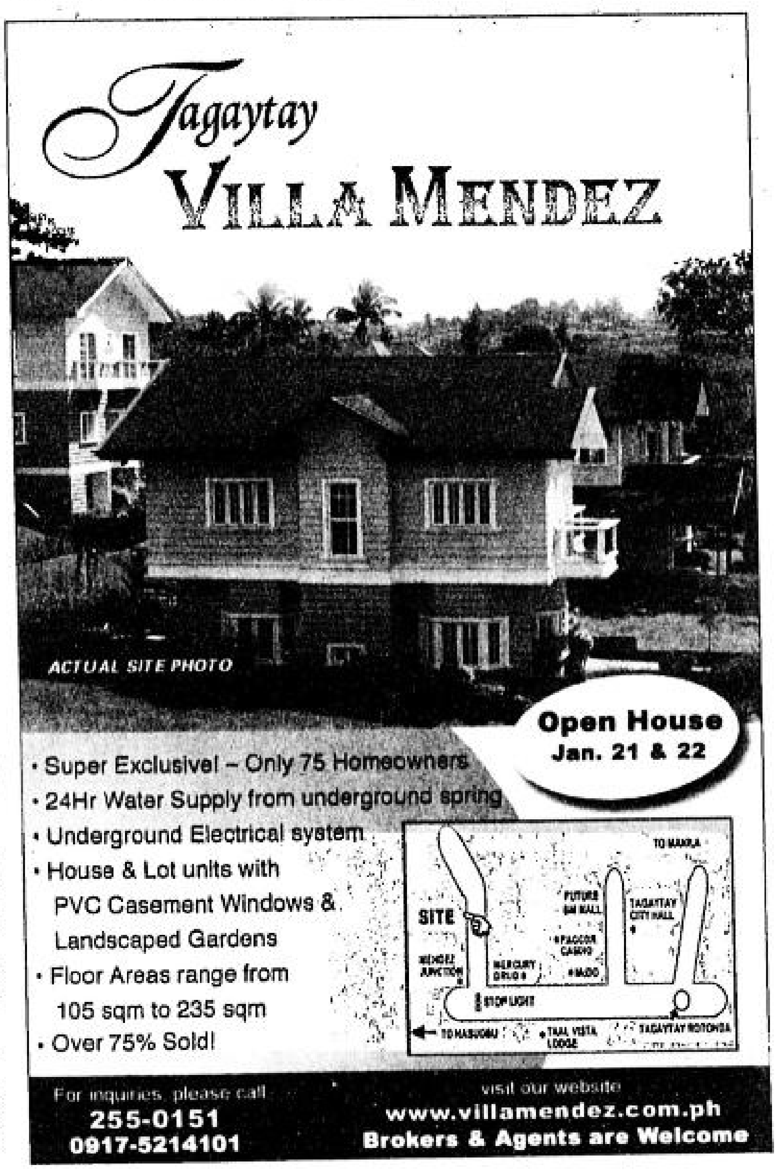
Belandes denied the charges, claiming he was at his family's meat shop in Lorega at the time. His lawyers, Danilo Yap and Leslie Salva, said they would appeal the ruling.

Judge Gako said in his decision read before a jampacked court that he "has no reason to doubt the prosecution witnesses that they were present during the incident" and saw Belandres shoot Dizon.

More than 50 journalists, mostly from the provinces, have been killed since 1986, prompting international journalists' groups to put the Philippines in their list of most dangerous places for journalists.

Last week, a former boxer suspected of killing Cebu broadcaster George Benaojan in December last year surrendered to police to clear his name.

Roberto "Dinky" Jagdon, of Lawaan Uno, Talisay City, denied involvement in the killing of dyDD reporter George Benaojan on Dec. 1, 2005. *With a report from Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*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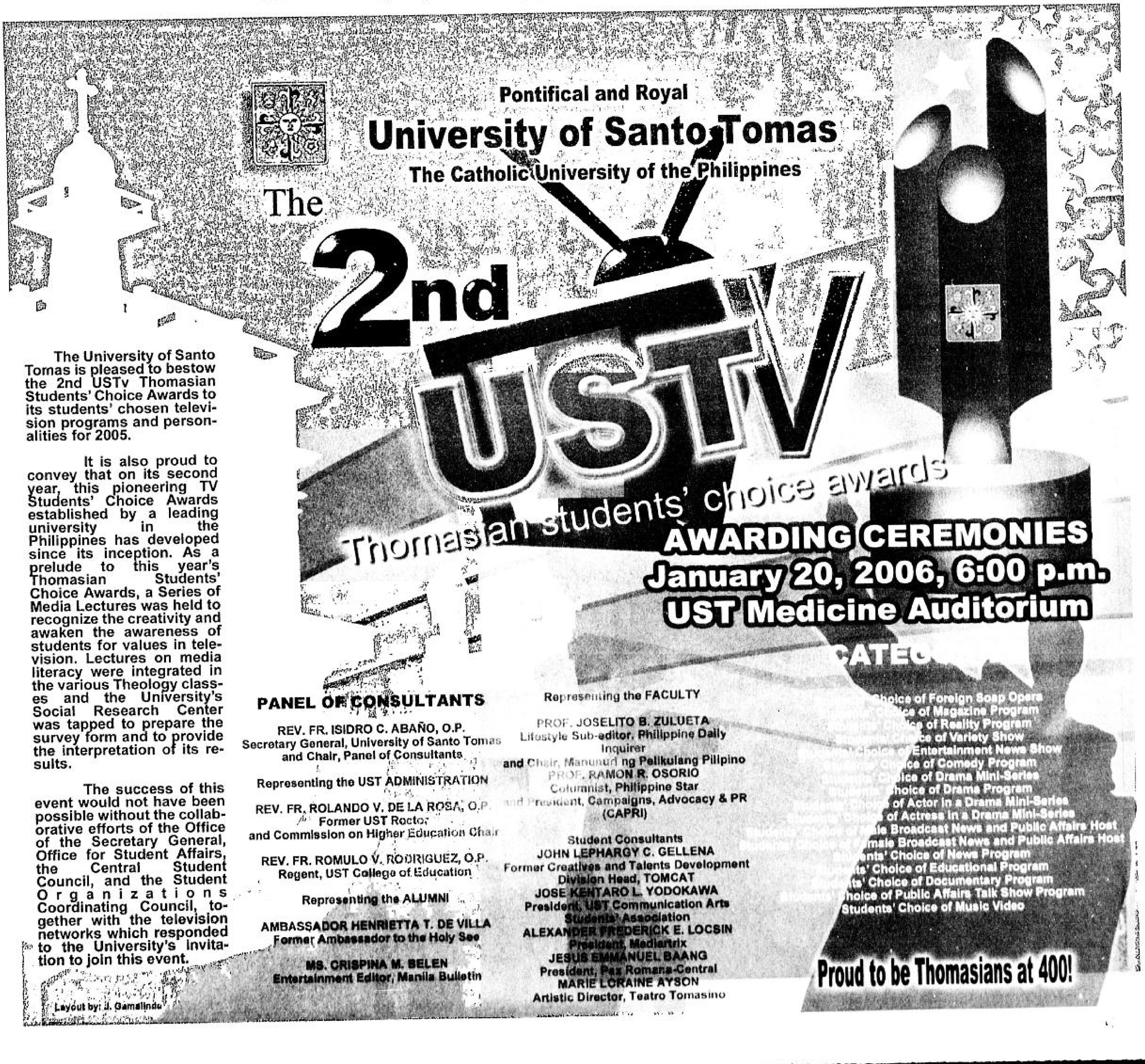
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The success of this event would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of the Office of the Secretary General, Office for Student Affairs, the Central Student Council, and the Student Organizations Coordinating Council, together with the television networks which responded to the University's invitation to join this event.

Layout by: J. Gamalindo

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Asean ministers back antiprostitution bid

DAVAO CITY—THE 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) vowed to rid the region of child prostitution and the sex industry as a whole.

In a joint statement released after the 9th Meeting of Asean Tourism Ministers (ATM) on Tuesday, the leaders said they would support a regional education campaign as a unified approach to fight sexual exploitation of children in tourism destinations.

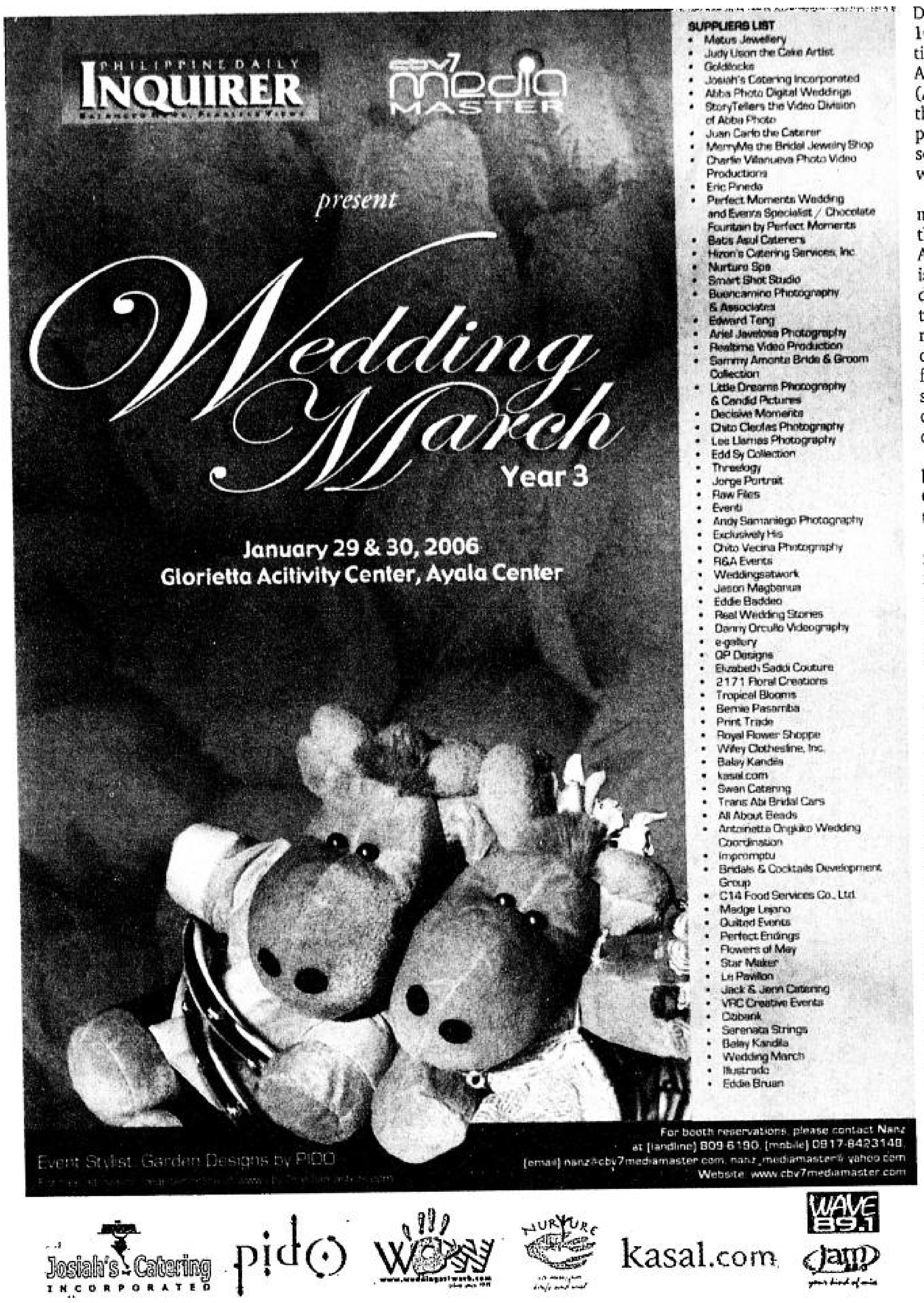
The campaign is being led by the Child Wise International.

The international media consistently ranked Asean nations as top tourist destinations and countries with thriving prostitution trades.

Philippine Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said the Asean tourism ministers agreed that prostitution, if not corrected, would be detrimental to tourism. "We all share the same sentiments that failure to protect the rights of women and children in the long run is not good for the tourism industry," he said.

Durano said the ministers understood that prostitution was damaging to the industry. Stopping it could spur the growth of the Asean tourism industry, he said.

Tourist arrivals in Asean countries rose by over 4.7 percent to 44 million in 2005 from 2004. *Judy Quiros, PDI Mindanao Bureau*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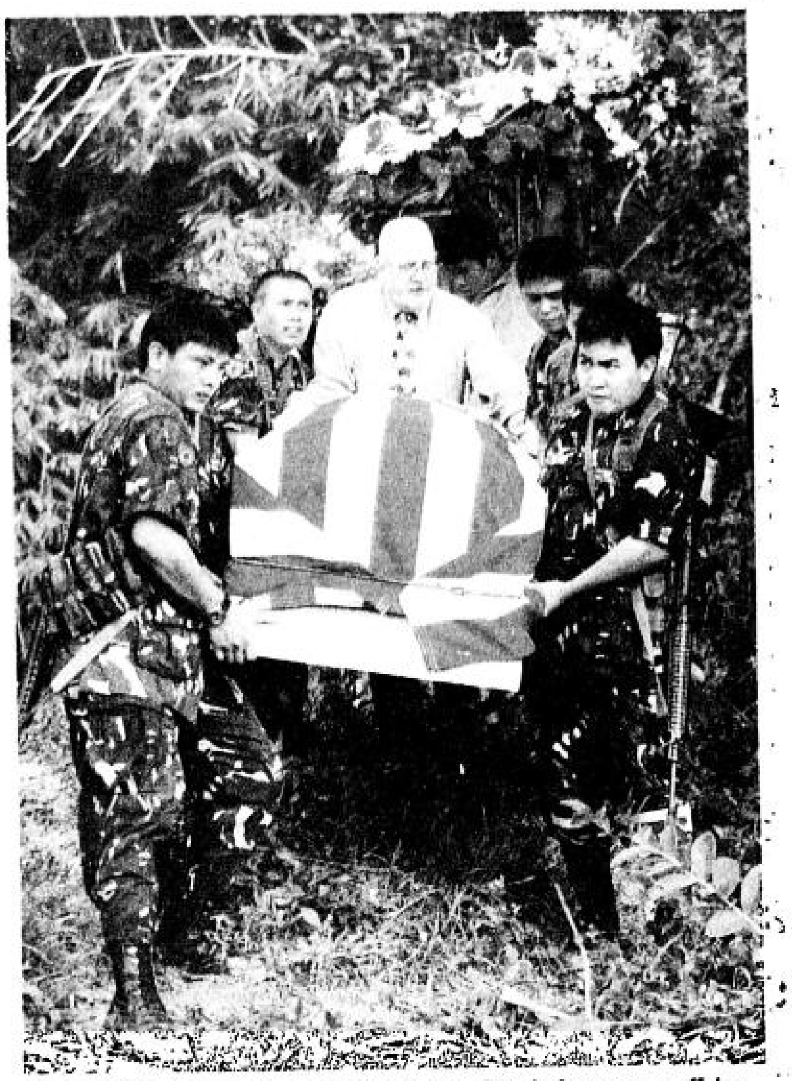

PHILIPPINE Army soldiers, assisted by the head of mortuary affairs of the US Army in Korea, Al McFarland (center), carry the US flag-draped coffin of Army Sgt. Myla Maravillosa in Inabanga, Bohol, during burial rites for the Filipino-American soldier who died in the line of duty in Iraq.
CHERYL RAVELO/REUTERS

Fil-Am soldier receives full US military honors

By Chito Fuentes,
PDI Visayas Bureau
and Oliver Teves, *AP*

INABANGA—PROUD TOWNSfolk of the first Filipino-American woman soldier killed in Iraq buried her remains Thursday with full US military honors in the tiny village where she grew up before migrating to America nine years ago.

A Roman Catholic chapel near the childhood home of Army Sgt. Myla Maravillosa in the village of U-og in central Inabanga was too small to accommodate the hundreds of people who attended the funeral Mass.

A contingent of US Army honor guards, led by Brig. Gen. Gregory Schumacher, provided traditional military honors, while Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado directed all Philippine flags flown at half staff in the entire province.

Schumacher, commander of the Military Intelligence Readiness Command at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, described Maravillosa as a "true Filipino-American hero" who "represented the very best of the qualities that we desire in our soldiers and indeed represented the very best of humanity itself."

"The ties between the United States and the Philippines are deep and enduring and she is a symbol of that very strong relationship," he said.

Schumacher knelt, unmindful of the muddy ground, as he offered the folded US flag that draped Maravillosa's coffin to her mother Estelita, together with her daughter's US military medals, including the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart and the Meritorious Service Medal.

White balloons

Relatives and friends released white balloons with the message, "We will always remember, we will love you forever." Estelita clutched the US flag and watched quietly as people wept.

"What sorrows I have now, I have to accept because that is her fate," Estelita said at the chapel. "She died not in vain. She died for a cause—for the freedom of the whole world."

Provincial administrator Tomas Abapo said Maravillosa "died an honorable death in an important war" against terrorism, which is also plaguing the Philippines.

Maravillosa moved to Hawaii when she was 16 to join her mother, who migrated in 1986. She attended college in Wahiawa and enlisted in the US Army Reserves in 1999.

On Christmas Eve, Maravillosa's Humvee was attacked by Iraqi insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades, mortally wounding her, according to the US defense department.

Maravillosa, an interrogator assigned to the 301st Military Intelligence Battalion, had been in Iraq for only a little more than a month.

Tasks

She was the first Filipino-American woman soldier to die in Iraq. At least one other Philippine-born US soldier has been killed in Iraq since 2003.

Her grade school teacher, Dulce Betinol, said she could not imagine "this cute, gentle girl, so sweet with a ready smile" joining the Army and marching off to war.

"None of us thought or even just dreamed that our (village would) ever produce such a young woman with such commitment, serving at the cost of her life," Betinol said.

At 8:10 a.m., the white hearse that carried her American flag-draped casket arrived at the U-og's Imaculada Concepcion Chapel.

Villagers emerged from houses and stores around the chapel grounds.

Seven American soldiers in full green Army uniforms carried the coffin into the 200-seat capacity chapel as the crowd swelled, waiting for the go-signal to be allowed inside according to a predetermined seating arrangement.

Three Philippine Army soldiers, in their official camouflage uniforms, assisted the American soldiers.

A teacher said classes have been suspended to allow them to take part in the rites for Myla who finished elementary in the U-og school.

The chapel was neatly adorned with white, yellow and pink gladiolas, Malaysian mums and Poland roses brought in from Cebu.

Among those who paid tribute to Myla were Officer Abraham Guillermo of the US Army's 301st Military Intelligence Group and Brig. Gen. Gregory Schumacher, commander of the Army Reserve Intelligence Readiness Command.

While the crowd outside the chapel had grown restless during the proceedings, which lasted more than three hours, others alternately peered through the chapel's decorative blocks to watch.

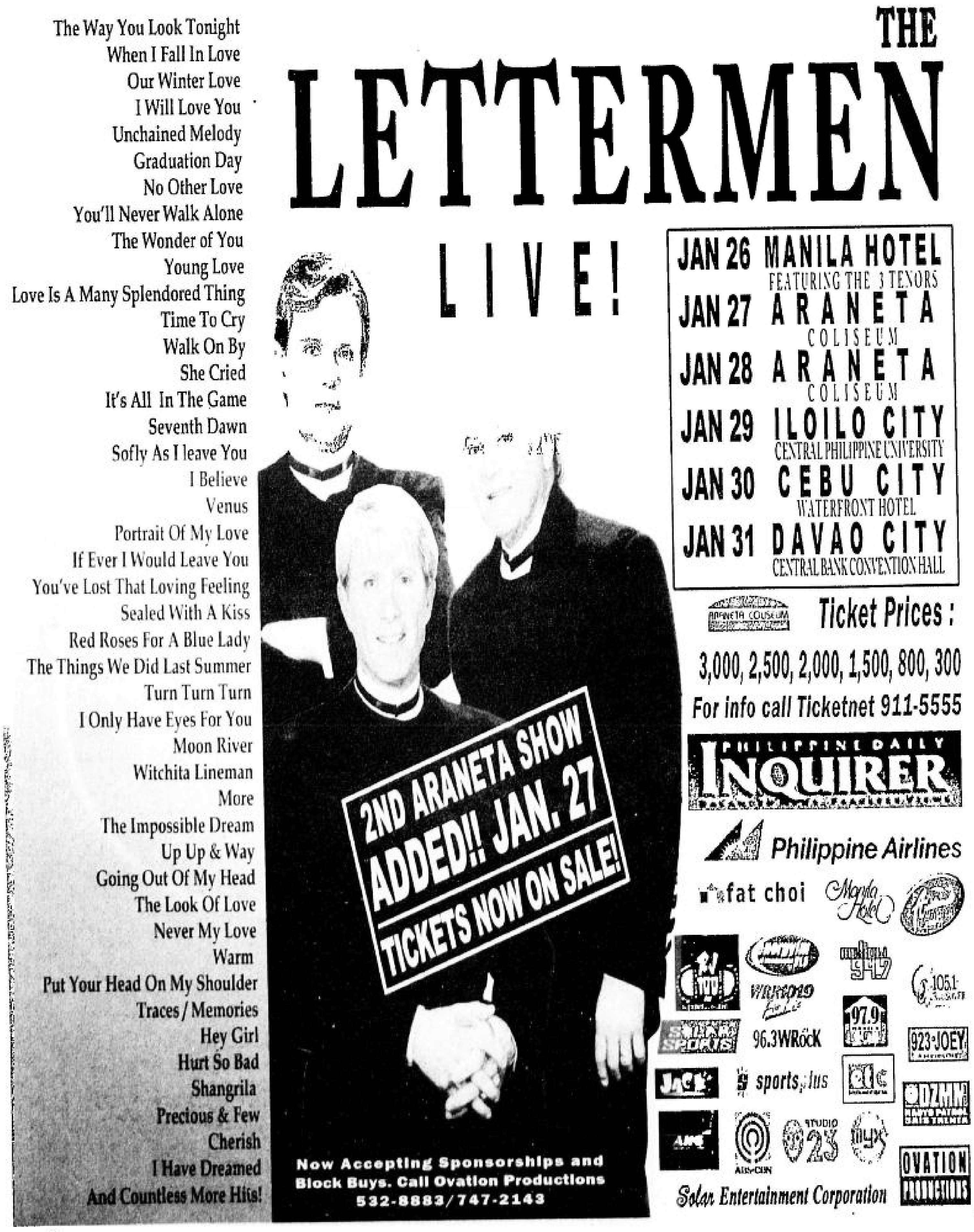
The coffin was brought out of the chapel at noon, as the chapel sound system blared the song "Joy In The Journey," Myla's favorite song sang by Michael Card.

At the U-og barangay cemetery, an American bugler, with his counterpart from the Philippine Air Force, played the taps before seven US soldiers fired the 21-gun salute.

The ceremony was over in 13 minutes.

It was only when the coffin was inserted into one of five vacant tombs in the family mausoleum, where her grandfather was buried, that the wailing started.

The wailing grew faint as 51 white balloons were released into the overcast sky.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2 firms could face raps for illegal wells

By Blanche S. Rivera

TWO WELL-KNOWN ESTABlishments in Ortigas Avenue, a long stretch that straddles San Juan town and Quezon City, have been illegally extracting water from Metro Manila's aquifer, enough to supply the commodity to about 1,000 households in the area, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) said yesterday.

The NWRB said it gave officials of the Greenhills shopping center and the Meralco complex until tomorrow to submit an affidavit that they have shut down their deep wells which have been operating illegally for an undetermined period. If they fail to do so, the NWRB said it would permanently seal their deep wells and file charges against them for violating the Water Code.

Alikpala said Meralco was extracting an estimated 20,000 cubic meters a month through its illegally constructed deep wells, enough water supply for 600 families. Greenhills Shopping Arcade, on the other hand, extracts about 12,000 cubic meters, good for 400 families.

"Both companies have continued to ignore notices from the NWRB to stop using their illegal deep wells or confine their usage from Manila Water," Alikpala said. The NWRB had received a tip last year that Meralco had been sourcing its water from the unregistered deep well. Meralco has refused to allow NWRB people into the compound for inspection but the agency has pictures of the illegal well, the NWRB said. Meralco has asked the NWRB to extend its deadline so the company could file a motion for reconsideration. The NWRB has said no to the request.

"If they want to file a motion for reconsideration, they should file it by Jan. 21," Alikpala said.

The NWRB, an attached agency of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, has launched a drive against 1,300 illegal deep well operators in Metro Manila whose operations threaten the water supply.

Contacted for comment, Greenhills Center General Manager Joey Santos said they were not aware of the NWRB deadline tomorrow. "We only have one deep well in operation which has a water permit. A water permit was denied for another well we had built as a backup. We told the NWRB that we respected their decision. We are now capping and shutting down this new well, and the process should be over by next week," he said.

The Meralco office could not be reached for comment.

11 hurt in Pasig road accident; truck mishap causes Makati traffic jam

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.
and Tarra V. Quismundo

TWO TRUCKS WERE INVOLVED in separate accidents yesterday, leaving 11 persons injured in Pasig City and causing a huge traffic jam in Makati.

In the first incident, 11 persons, nine of them students on their way to school, were hurt yesterday in a four-vehicle mishap on Victor Ignacio Boulevard in Pasig City.

The police said an Elf truck, which had just unloaded boxes of fish at a nearby market, rammed into a passing tricycle.

Because of the impact, the tricycle hit another tricycle, which also rammed an owner-type jeep parked just meters away.

The multiple collision left nine students on board the two tricycles and two drivers injured, PO2 Normandy Mapile told the INQUIRER.

Frederico Del Castillo, 51, the driver of the truck, told the traffic investigators that he had just overtaken another vehicle when he hit the tricycle being driven by Ernesto Gallardo, 61.

The five students on board Gallardo's tricycle were brought to the Pasig City General Hospital.

Four of them—Shiela May Abante, 15; Mark Anthony Abante, 14; Candy Nedic, 15, and John Ray Quarito, 15—were released later in the day.

But Roydan Lisada, 15, remained at the hospital. He sustained serious head injuries, Mapile said.

The students in the second tricycle—Janica Ramos, 15; Mary Glo Aparre, 15, Mary Jo Aparre, 13, and an unidentified boy—were brought to the Mission Hospital, along with the driver, Ernesto Ariola, 34.

In Makati City, another Elf truck full of gravel tipped over on its side at dawn yesterday on the Magallanes interchange, causing a traffic jam that lasted for hours along Edsa's southbound lane, up to Ortigas Avenue.

The impact caused the truck to lean to the left, before the vehicle fell over on its side and spilled its load of gravel onto the road, said Southern District Traffic Enforcement Group chief, Supt. Rogelio Martinez.

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation Office-in-Charge Nestor Mantaring (seated, center) shows firearms seized from Eds Eden Asban y Macalino, alias Eduardo Mallari Glenden Batinga, and Rexam Bichierro (behind) yesterday. RAFFY LERMA

Fake agents nabbed using NBI office

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THEY BEAT THE LEGITIMATE TENANTS TO the latter's new office in Antipolo City.

After surveillance operations, the National Bureau of Investigation's (NBI) Anti-Organized Crime Division (AOCD) arrested on Wednesday three jobless men posing as agents at the NBI's proposed satellite office.

NBI officer in charge Nestor Mantaring identified the suspects as Eds Eden Asban, alias Eduardo Mallari, of Sta. Mesa, Manila; Glenden Batinga, of Cainta, Rizal; and Rexam Bichierro, of Antipolo City. The other suspects—Mart Magiba, Cesar Coronado, Virgilio Cortez, Boyet Gambuza, an alias Mando, and a John Doe—remain at large. NBI agents headed by lawyer Oscar Embido also seized five shotguns, 10 .38 caliber revolvers and three two-way radio units from the suspects.

"Our people haven't even begun moving to the proposed NBI satellite office," Mantaring said. "Apparently, these people were able to beat us to our new quarters."

The Antipolo city government had offered the building, occupied previously by the Philippine National Police, to the NBI last year.

Joke not funny for parents, kids

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THIS WAS ONE JOKE THOUSANDS OF ANXious parents who rushed to at least six public schools in Mandaluyong City yesterday morning did not find funny.

Parents across the city panicked after television and radio stations reported a bomb threat at a public school earlier in the day. Classes were cancelled in many schools in the city after parents rushed to fetch their children from school.

Special Weapons and Tactics operatives of the Mandaluyong police department quickly scoured the schools for bombs but found none, city police chief Senior Supt. Ericson Velasquez told the INQUIRER.

Patrol 117, an emergency hotline, reportedly received a call from an unidentified caller at about 5:30 a.m. yesterday, saying a bomb had been planted at the Mataas na Paaralan ng Neptali Gonzales building in Barangay Mauway. This is the fourth time in the last six months that the school received a bomb threat, said Velasquez.

"We were surprised when parents crowded our gates and said they wanted to bring their children home," said Eulogio Rodriguez Elementary School teacher Rowena Igmen. "We had no choice but to suspend our classes," she added. Four other elementary schools and another high school faced the same situation.

Pranksters could have made the calls as policemen were about to conduct an anti-crime drive yesterday, according to authorities.

METROBRIEFS

Slay suspect arrested

THE MAIN suspect in the killing of a fish trader at the Navotas fish port last year has been arrested. Navotas police chief, Supt. Genesis Tolejano, said Sonny Sunga 31, of Barangay NBBN, was arrested recently as he was walking on Lapu-Lapu St., North Bay, Boulevard South. "His jailed companion pointed to him as the one who stabbed and killed Arnel Camua, a businessman in the fish port," Tolejano said. The police said their next target was the mastermind behind the killing of Camua. Camua was carrying over P1 million in cash and checks when four men approached him inside the fish port. When they tried to take the bag where the money was hidden, he resisted and was shot dead by the suspects. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

QC mayor bans fixers

QUEZON City Hall employees are now banned from "hand-carrying" business permit applications or tax payments, in a bid to get rid of fixers. And another thing, no more "follow-ups." In a memorandum circular, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. has prohibited all city government employees from personally following up transactions like applications for business licenses and tax payments, or applications for building, electrical, health, occupational and sanitary permits, among others. He warned that employees found guilty of violating the directive face administrative and criminal sanctions. *DJ Yap*

BAWAL NA YAN!
EEK!

Traffic-free Valenzuela

THE VALENZUELA City government has signed an agreement with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) and the Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) which will hopefully address the city's traffic problems. The agreement was signed on Wednesday by Valenzuela City Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian, DPWH Undersecretary Manuel M. Bonoan and MNTC President Oscar Lopez. Under the agreement, the city government, in cooperation with the MNTC and DPWH, will carry out improvements on streets approaching the Valenzuela interchange, particularly along Gen. Luis and Maysan roads. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

PCCHS Class '63 reunion

THE PHILIPPINE College of Commerce High School Batch '63 will celebrate its 43rd anniversary with a 3-day out-of-town reunion on Jan. 21 to 23, at the Meralco Foundation Professional Center in Talisay, Batangas. Assembly time is 8 a.m. at the parking lot at the back of the Cultural Center of the Philippines near Star City, Pasay City. Registration starts at 11:30 a.m. For inquiries, please call Belma Cristobal-Orca at 5271840/2519409 or Elizabeth Nicolas-Vengua at 7156601.

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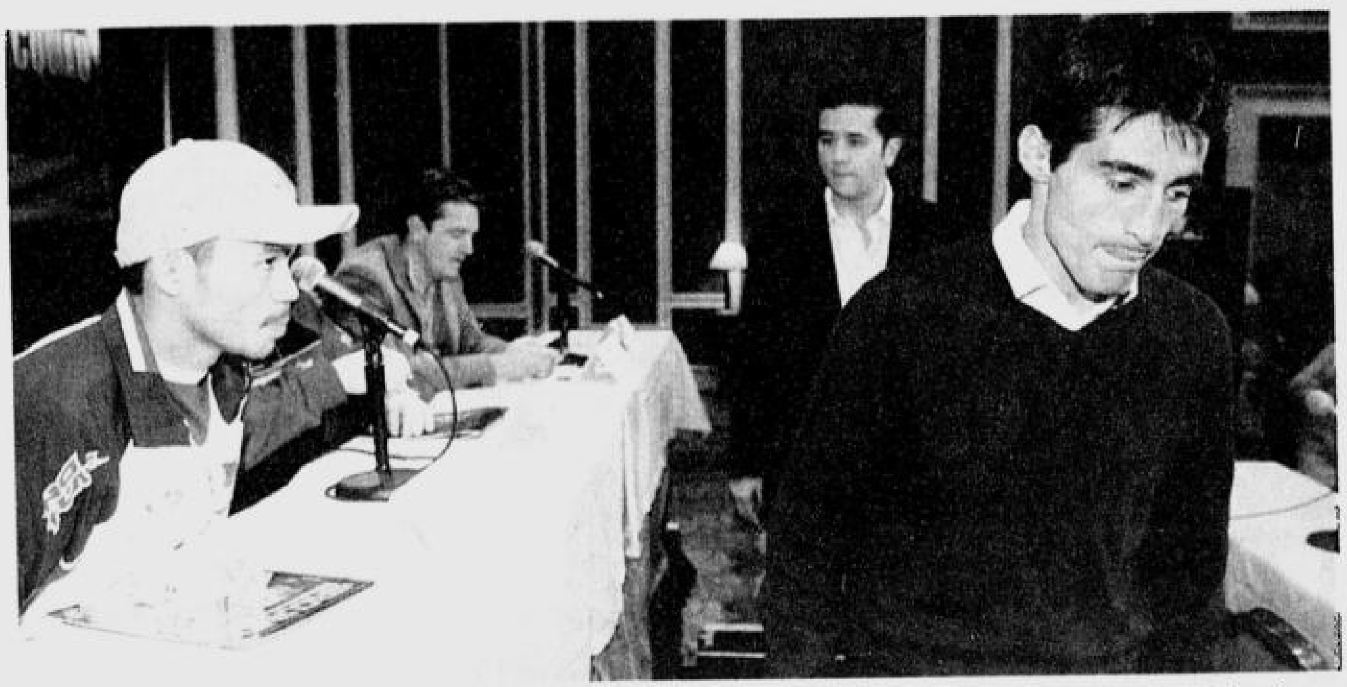
Morales can't remember a heavy Pacquiao punch

By Recah Trinidad


ERIK Morales (right) avoids eye contact with Manny Pacquiao (left) as he arrives for a news conference in Las Vegas Wednesday. AP

LAS VEGAS—IF THERE'S one fighter who had hit him hard, real hard, Erik Morales said it definitely was not knockout star Manny Pacquiao of the Philippines.

It was Junior Jones, Morales confided to a handful of media people at the end of the press conference for "The Battle" at the Wynn hotel-casino yesterday.

Morales did beat Jones, but only after the talented African-American boxer had sent El Terrible to queer streets.

Jones, strong and stylish, was the same ring craftsman who had twice beaten WBC super featherweight champion Marco Antonio Barrera, two-time conqueror of Morales.

"But what about Pacquiao, don't you remember being hit big by him," Morales was asked by a Mexican reporter.

"No, nada," Morales mused while shaking his handsome head.

There were well-founded claims that Pacquiao had come close to decking Morales after the Mexican boxing icon opted to slug it out in the final round of their previous encounter.

But Morales cooly claimed not remembering any significant big punch from Pacquiao.

Morales also clarified that there had never been any trouble in his camp, despite the exit of his father as his trainer.

He said the father was not dumped; instead, the old man had to be relieved of the pressures after he was hospitalized twice.

Morales was reacting to reports in the Mexican media that he fired his father, who had charted him to three world championships.

The Mexican hero is seeing action after a loss to former US Olympian Zahir Raheem last September in a card where Pacquiao had earlier stopped Hector Velasquez also of Mexico.

Morales fought then as a lightweight (135 lb) and the Filipino as a super featherweight or junior lightweight (130) which is the weight limit for Saturday's rematch.

Where to catch 'The Battle'

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What they should, shouldn't do

By Recah Trinidad

LAS VEGAS—MANNY PACQUIAO (PROnounced Pack-key-ow) is "fast, fast, fast and gets out of the gate quickly to charge at his opponent in a hell-bent-for-leather manner. He moves in behind a sharp right jab, often doubling it up, then follows with a powerful left—including hooks and uppercuts—which, in range, tend to be effective. He possesses bottomless energies, enabling him to maintain his windmill-like attack throughout."

Erik Morales?

El Terrible "possesses an excellent and hard left jab and a long, hard right cross. Coupled with his height advantage and excellent counter-punching abilities, he could convert these plusses into an advantage over the shorter Pacquiao, who tends to leave himself open. He has a set of tough whiskers, proven in the 12th round of his first fight with Pacquiao, when he gave as much as he got."

Those sharp points, mind you, are not from a pot-bellied armchair analyst. They were from Bert Randolph Sugar, author of "Boxing's Greatest Fighters" (published by Barnes & Noble and Amazon.Com) and distributed to members of the foreign media in yesterday's presscon at the Mouton Ballroom in Wynn Las Vegas.

The same pamphlet detailed what each fighter must do to win.

PACQUIAO: Must move more—here he promises a "surprise"—staying on top and forcing Morales backwards, against the ropes, into corners; must keep his hands up to thwart counters and move into range behind his right jab; must draw Morales into a slugfest, as he did in the 12th round of their first fight when he staggered him; must add movement and a right hook to his arsenal.

MORALES: Must put to good use his advantage in height; use his longer (and straighter) left jab to maintain control as he did in the middle rounds of the first match; must move on Pacquiao who has trouble with movement, keeping bout at long range, at mid-ring, not back into the ropes; cannot afford to engage in a slugging match; must fight a disciplined fight, continually turning Pacquiao, countering and moving; must keep Pacquiao off-balanced.

Meanwhile, odds at the sports book at Wynn Las Vegas, main sponsor of "The Battle," have remained even at the close of betting hours yesterday; no significant shift since Monday.

There's a prevailing feeling the fight won't go the full 12 rounds.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the general viewing public that Solar Entertainment Corporation has the legal and exclusive rights for the standard and non-standard coverage of the **"THE BATTLE"** a boxing event featuring **Manny Pacquiao** and **Erik Morales** in the main bout.

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SOLAR SPORTS

Pacman, El Terrible promise great fight

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—WITH THE boxing gloves issue finally settled, Manny Pacquiao and Erik "El Terrible" Morales faced the media yesterday at the Wynn hotel here for the final press conference of this Saturday's big rematch (Sunday in Manila) at the Thomas and Mack Center at the University of Las Vegas.

"Both of us will give you a great fight," Pacquiao said in English, the only boxer to speak the language at the podium. "I thank all my people, my team, and the President of my country for their support."

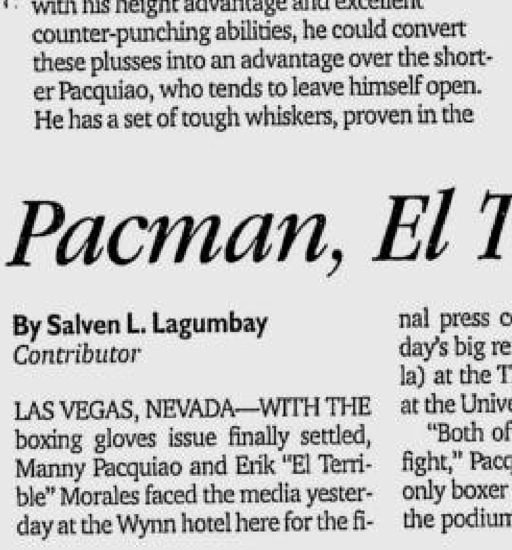
Trainer Freddie Roach also indicated that Pacquiao will be at his best and there will be no excuses after the fight.

"We're ready for Saturday," Morales said through an interpreter. "It's going to be a difficult fight."

Nevada State Athletic Commission chair Marc Ratner told the INQUIRER earlier that Morales' camp has decided to go back to using Erik's favorite Winning gloves, while Pacquiao will use Cleto Reyes, the punchers' gloves.

Pacto regains lead with Carito

By Musong R. Castillo


PACTOLERIN: Back in front despite a 73. PDI PHOTO

ROBERT PACTOLERIN BOUNCED BACK AS PROmised, carding a one-over-par 73 yesterday to regain the lead with Carito Villaroman after 54 holes of the third Omega Open at Wack Wack East.

The burly Pactolerin, who had earlier rounds of 69-79, picked himself up after a double bogey-5 on the 16th with clutch pars in his last two holes to catch Villaroman with a 221 total.

Villaroman, a former world jungolf champ, had three bogeys coming in and settled for a 74.

The two frontrunners held a one-stroke lead over second-round leaders Mars Pucay and Anthony Balan and a hard-charging Ramil Bisera.

Bisera assembled the day's best score of 70 and vaulted to joint third at 222 from a tie for 11th overnight after turning in a 33 in his backside highlighted by birdies on Nos. 12, 13 and 16th.

Asian Tour veteran Pucay and Balan, a driving range pro from Kagitingan, struggled with 77s as tough pin placements bedevilled almost everyone, including club member Gerard Cantada.

The overweight Cantada five-putted the second green from just about a driver's length en route to a 78 yesterday, dropping to a share of eighth spot with Richard Sinfuego at 226.

Sinfuego, after a brilliant 69 Wednesday, turned in a 74 and was tied at 229 with senior pro Rey Alit, who had a 79.

"We all had difficulty with the pin placements today," Pactolerin, the first-round leader, said.

The top 10 scores:

221—R. Pactolerin (69-79-73), C. Villaroman (77-70-74); 222—R. Bisera (77-75-70), M. Pucay (73-72-77), A. Balan (73-72-77); 224—R. Garalde (73-74-77); 225—B. Magada (77-71-77); 226—R. Sinfuego (83-69-74), G. Cantada (71-77-78); 229—R. Alit (75-75-79)

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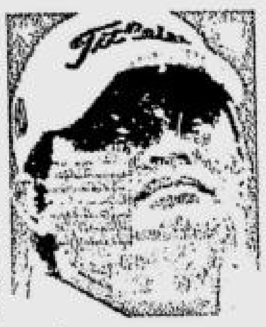

MIÑOZA

KARACHI—VETERAN FRANKIE Miñoza matched par 72 while Asian Tour rookie Juvic Pagunsan flashed tremendous promise by opening with a 73 in the Pakistan Open golf championship Thursday.

The two Filipinos seemed poised to make it to the top 67 players who will proceed to the weekend play after Friday's round along with Tony Lascuña and Artemio Murakami who scored identical two-over-par 74s.

Miñoza had nines of 34-38 at the par-72 Karachi Golf Club course, his round spoiled by a double bogey on the par-5 11th.

Pagunsan, who easily hurdled the Asian Tour qualifying school last week, was two over after three holes but rallied to get down to even par with three holes left after birdies on the fifth, 11th and 14th holes.

But he bogeyed the 16th to finish with a 36-37 card. His other bogeys came on the first, third and 12th holes.

Cookie La'O nursed slim hopes of qualifying with a 75 along with Gerald Rosales and Felix Casas, who had 76s. Angelo Que carded a 77 like Jerome Delariarte, also an Asian Tour Qualifying School this year.

Jeev Milkha Singh, Amandeep Johl and Ashok Kumar of India shared the lead with Australian Pat Giles with 68s.

Nuggets thwart Cavs

NEW YORK—CARMELO ANTHONY AND EARL Boykins bagged 17 points each to overshadow another big effort from Cleveland's LeBron James in leading the Denver Nuggets to a 90-89 victory over the Cavaliers in Colorado on Wednesday.

Once again, James paced the Cavs with a game-high 24 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists but missed a pivotal free throw with less than a second remaining to send the slumping Cavaliers to their fifth consecutive defeat.

Kenyon Martin and Eduardo Najera contributed 16 points apiece to the Denver total as the Nuggets picked up their third straight win and seventh in nine outings.

Trailing 90-87 James was fouled sending him to the foul line where he hit his first of two shots then purposefully missed the second looking for the rebound.

James was fouled again sending him back to the foul line with a chance to send the contest to overtime.

The Cavaliers all-star nailed his first shot but watched his second clang off the rim, giving the Nuggets the victory.

The Nuggets took command early racing to a 28-14 first quarter lead but saw their advantage trimmed to 48-43 by the half.

After three quarters the Denver lead was reduced to 71-70 but the Nuggets managed to make the one-point advantage hold up over the final 12 minutes.

In Atlanta, Chauncey Billups scored 23 points and Richard Hamilton added 21 as the Detroit Pistons romped to 117-89 win over the Hawks in a clash between the NBA's best and worst teams. *Reuters*

COMPLETE RESULTS: Detroit 117, Atlanta 89; Indiana 98, Charlotte 92; Orlando 106, Washington 98; New Jersey 101, Philadelphia 90; Boston 103, Minnesota 96; New Orleans 87, Memphis 79; San Antonio 95, Milwaukee 92; Chicago 106, New York 104 (OT); Dallas 103, Houston 76; Denver 90, Cleveland 89; Portland 96, Toronto 94; Phoenix 112, LA Clippers 102.

NBA ON TV: The Los Angeles Lakers and the Sacramento Kings renew their rivalry in the Pacific Division today at 11:30 a.m. live on STAR Sports.

Solar Sports will air the Detroit-New York tussle at 9 a.m. with a replay at 9 p.m.

UPSIDE DOWN: Kim Clijste

Tour 2006 registration

REGISTRATION FOR the Philippine National Cycling Association's (PNCA) two-day qualifying races for the 2006 Tour ng Pilipinas is ongoing. Interested cyclists may register at the PNCA office at the Amoranto Sports Complex in Quezon City, according to PNCA president Paquito Rivas. For inquiries, call 0916-2601992. The qualifying races coincide with Tagaytay City's Pista Ng Pag-ibig cycling festival on Feb. 12 and 13. The PNCA and Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham Tolentino agreed on the qualifying races.

NCA World tournament

A WIDE-OPEN RACE for the title among 48 qualifiers is expected today in the championship round of the NCA World Championship 8-cock derby at the San Juan Coliseum. The first of 96 world-class fights will be unleashed at 4 p.m. Among those in contention are the entries of Gene Batia of Sunset Recreational Club, Jun Topacio, Patrick Antonio, the team of Rey Morrison, Eddie O'Dell and Rep. Ronnie Puno, Chuck Halbert, Richard Burris and Jesry Palmares, Jimbo Cox and JV Magsaysay; Gov. Ito Ynares, former DILG undersecretary Jun Santiago, Orlando Sazon of Balbina Group, Amboy Manlapaz, Pico Berin, and Claude Bautista.

Pasay 4-cock derby today

ABOUT 50 FAST-PACED and exciting matches are lined up tonight at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit via the special 4-cock derby. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. For an entry fee of P7,700, the cash prize at stake is P200,000. The event will be hosted by PCC management. Seeing action tonight are well-known cockers and breeders of Metro Manila, said pit managers Eric dela Rosa, Butchoy Olano and Roming Vergara. For inquiries, call PCC office: 843-1746, 843-1890 and 816-6750.

Candelaria 7-cocker

WITH THE 2006 WORLD Slasher Cup set to stage its finals tomorrow, major sponsor Thunderbird Power Feeds prepares for the start of the 2006 Candelaria Derby at the Iloilo Coliseum in Jaro, Iloilo. The 2006 Candelaria 7-Cock Derby is set from Jan. 29 to Feb. 2. A whopping P7 million in total prizes are up for grabs with the entry fee pegged at P48,000 and a minimum bet requirement of P22,000. Hosted by Chito Tinsay, the event is supported by Thunderbird Hi-Protein Power Pellets.

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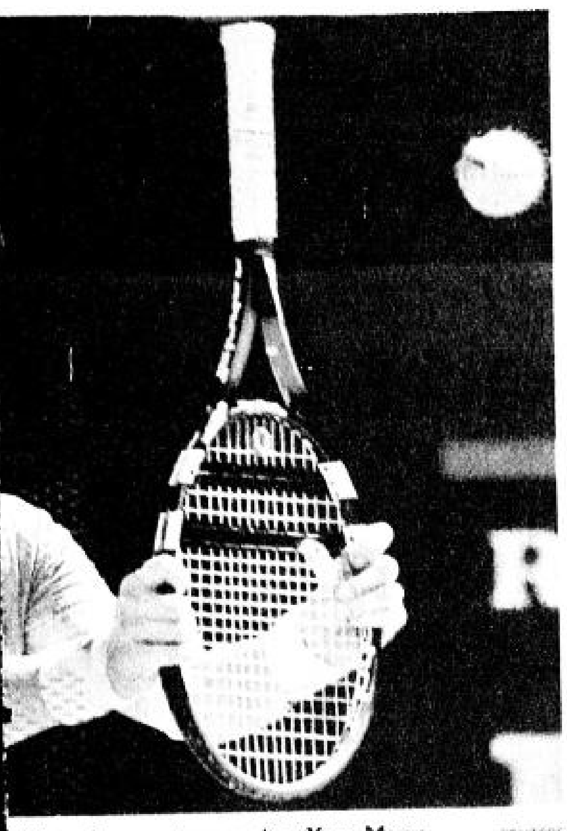
Hewitt, Pierce bow out; Federer glides through



s hits a fancy return against Yuan Meng. REUTERS

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—THIRD seed Lleyton Hewitt and women's fifth seed Mary Pierce were sent spinning out of the Australian Open Thursday, but an awesome Roger Federer glided through to the third round.

Hewitt's dream of glory in front of his home crowd was shattered by Argentina's Juan Ignacio Chela, who outclassed the Australian, 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (8/10), 6-2.

The former Wimbledon and US Open champion, who was struggling with a left ankle injury, became the highest seeded casualty of the first Grand Slam of the season.

That honor had been Pierce's for several hours after she failed to find the sizzling comeback form that swept her to two Grand Slam finals last year, falling 6-3, 7-5 to Iveta Benesova of the Czech Republic.

She was the second big-name flop on the women's side after Venus Williams.

A third top player could soon be joining them with Kim Clijsters continuing to struggle with a hip injury which she said threatened her campaign, which is good news for Martina Hingis whose remarkable comeback cranked up a gear.

The triple champion blitzed Finn Emma Laine, 6-1, 6-1, and with Pierce out the draw has opened up for her.

It was an equally awesome rout by the "Fed Ex," who rolled over Florian Mayer of Germany, 6-1, 6-4, 6-0. In just 72 minutes on center court as his drive for a seventh Grand Slam title revved up.

Hewitt's former girlfriend Clijsters, seeded two, has been installed as tournament favorite by the bookies but is playing one game at a time as she struggles to beat the hip injury that she developed in Sydney last week.

The US Open champion beat China's Meng Yuan, 6-4, 6-2, but needed medical attention on her right hip in the second set, was making her participation a day-to-day proposition. *AFP*

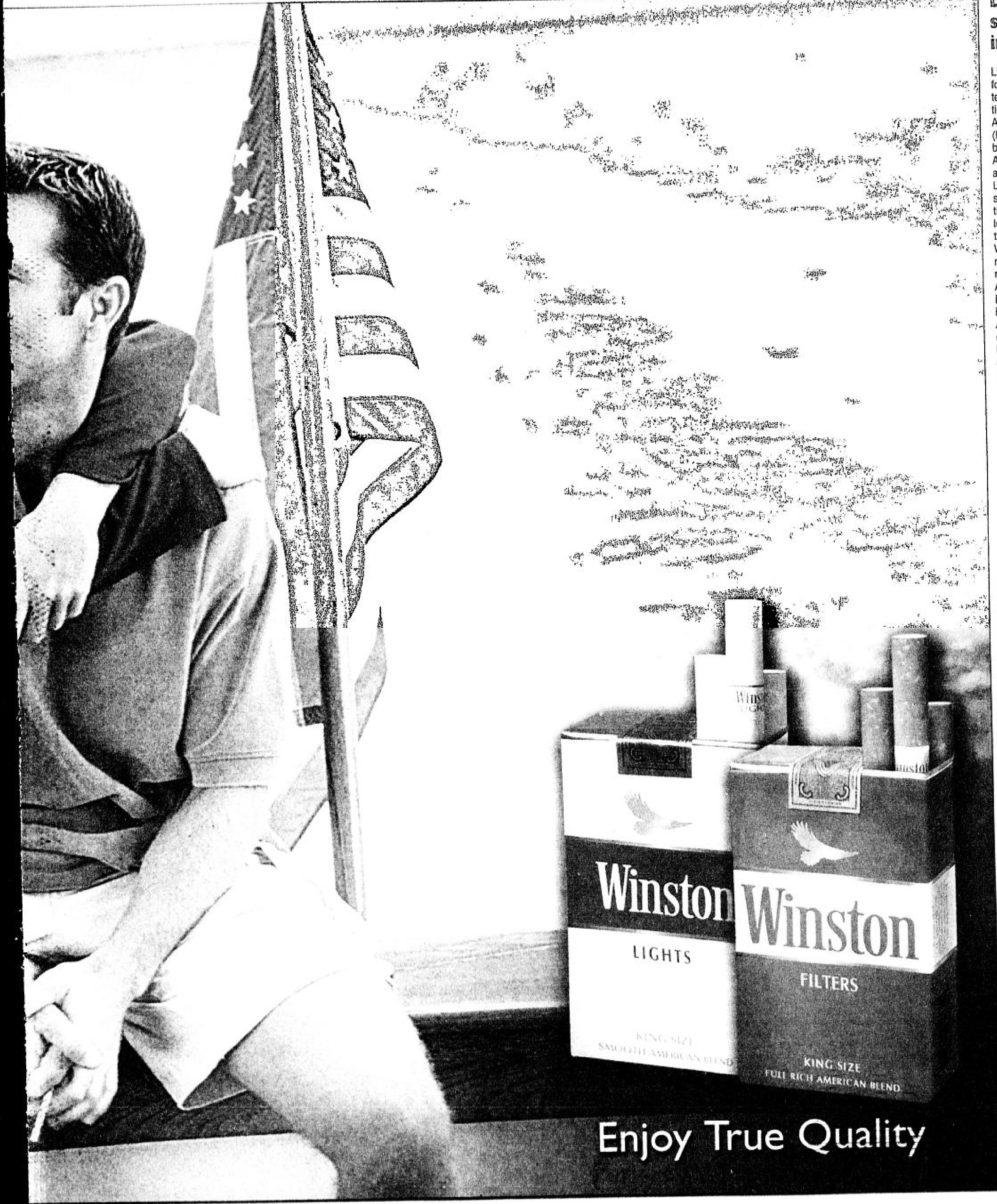
GUILLERMO Coria eyes the ball intently. AFP

Lightnings strike twice in NCRAA

LIGHTNING STRUCK for the second time yesterday in the 13th National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball tournament. The Asian College of Science and Technology (Acsat) Lightnings pulled off a second straight victory at the expense of City Colleges of Manila, 72-51, at the EAC Sports Center. With their 2-1 win-loss record, the Lightnings moved behind unbeaten Arellano University Flaming Arrows and defending champion Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals. The Philippine Maritime Institute Admirals banked on big baskets by Larry Rodriguez, Louie Vinarao and Carlo Sta. Maria to put away La Salle-Dasmariñas, 84-75. The Admirals' first win in two games kept the Patriots from catching up with the Flaming Arrows and the Generals. Rodriguez unloaded 21 points while Vinarao had 17 and Sta. Maria 16, with his two treys shattering a 52-52 count and allowing the Admirals to grab a 65-57 edge at the start of the fourth quarter. Last Tuesday, Jester Ebuen and Bong Melocoton shot 21 and 17 points, respectively, in powering the Generals to an 82-63 beating of the National College of Business and Arts Wildcats. JR Rosales tallied 18 points for the La Salle-Dasma Patriots, who beat CCM, 100-62.

Konika golf limited to 100 teams

BARRING ANY OVERriding reason, the Konica Minolta National Pro-Am will accept only 100 teams. "We are seriously considering limiting the roster to only 100 teams," said Comm. Danny Pizarro (ret.), chair of the organizing committee for the tournament presented by U-Bix Corp. and offering two Toyota cars as hole-in-one prizes. "We want quality teams. We want quality play." The tournament is set Feb. 7-11 at Riviera's Langer with a record pot of P1.7 mainly through the generosity of the father of the revived Pro-Am, U-Bix top honcho Bert Bravo. "If it's for the good of both our pros and amateurs, I will never think twice upping the ante," said Bravo, who co-chairs the executive committee with NGAP president Benny Gopez. Bravo, who bankrolled the U-Bix/Konica Manila Open at the Manila Golf Club and the Philippine Open at Southwoods in the '90s, revived the Pro-Am in 2001. The Celebrity Pro-Am on Feb. 7 will stake as hole-in-one prize a Toyota Innova, according to Toyota Motor Phils.' senior vice president Danny Isla.



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Express seek new heights vs TNT today

GAME TODAY (*Cuneta Astrodome*)
7 p.m.—Air21 vs Talk 'N Text
Game 1—Talk 'N Text d. Air21, 111-109
Game 2—Air21 d. Talk 'N Text, 90-87
Game 3—Air21 d. Talk 'N Text, 98-93

AIR21 SHOOTS FOR A FIRST-EVER semifinal stint when it tries to finish off Talk 'N Text in the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference quarterfinals tonight at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Inspired by a franchise-best quarterfinal appearance, the Express can wrap up the best-of-five series after grabbing a 2-1 edge with a convincing 98-93 victory in Game 3 Wednesday.

"We need to close the series in Game 4," said Air21 coach Bo Perasol. "Otherwise, the momentum will swing to Talk 'N Text."

If necessary, the deciding Game 5 would be scheduled tomorrow with the winner facing early semifinalist Purefoods Chunkee on Sunday. In either case, the Express or the Phone Pals would be playing three games in a row.

Still in search of a first-ever PBA championship, the Express finished third in the 2003 Invitationals, their highest achievement so far.

In a regular conference, however, Air21's best finish was sixth in the 2002 Governors Cup. It joined the league in 2001.

After securing an automatic seat in the semifinals, the Chunkee Giants are in the final stretch of a three-week respite.

"Again, it will be a battle of adjustments," said Perasol. "We should always be prepared to match anything that Talk 'N Text would throw at us." *June Navarro*

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Harbour in semis; Jewels gain playoff

By Jasmine W. Payo

TURNING TO ITS RESERVES IN THE CLOSING minutes, Harbour Centre quelled a Hapee-PCU counter-attack to escape with a 72-64 victory and a semifinal slot in the PBL Heroes Cup yesterday at the San Andres Gym.

The Harbour Centre stars started out strong, with Jerwin Gaco pacing the Portmasters with 15 points. But it was Jerome Paterno who nailed a key three-pointer with 1:14 remaining that took the fight out of Hapee-PCU, 69-61, after the Teethmasters had sliced the deficit to five, 66-61.

"Paterno had only a few points but he made the biggest shot," said coach Jorge Gallent after the Portmasters rolled to their sixth straight win, the longest winning streak this conference.

"Jenkins (Mesina) just got reactivated but he played well. Earn (Saguindel) is just a reliever but he always play 100 percent like Marcy Arellano."

The Montaña Jewels earlier forged a knockout match with Granny Goose for the last semifinal slot after posting an 82-73 win over the Tortillos.

Al Magpayo and Al Vergara fueled the Jewels' offense in the final two minutes for a 74-66 lead.

"My two Als, they made the big difference in this game," said Jewels coach Robert Sison.

Rain or Shine and Magnolia Ice Cream already claimed the first two semifinal slots after posting the best records in the elimination round.

The scores:

First Game

MONTAÑA 82—Magpayo 18, Vergara 15, Dela Cuesta 11, Juntilla 10, Bono 9, Compton 8, Mercado 7, Baguion 4, Capus 0.

GRANNY GOOSE 73—Grijaldo 15, Ibañes 11, Almeda 9, Concha 8, Latonio 8, Alfad 7, Quiñahan 5, Santos 4, Gavino 2, David 2, Doruelo 2, Cruz 0, Lanete 0, Ferrer 0, Saladaga 0.

Quarters: 16-21, 33-32, 54-52, 82-73

Second Game:

HARBOUR CENTRE 72—Gaco 15, Yeo 13, Reyes 12, Tenorio 9, Saguindel 6, Mesina 6, Arellano 5, Paterno 5, Raymundo 1, Alonzo 0, Coching 0.

HAPEE-PCU 64—Castro 18, Espinas 12, Gonzales 10, Belga 7, Baculi 5, Sanz 4, Moreño 4, Solis 4, Razon 0, Misa 0.

Quarters: 16-14, 30-27, 51-40, 72-64

ABBY Santos of Granny Goose dispute the rebound with Montaña's Francis Mercado. RYAN LIM

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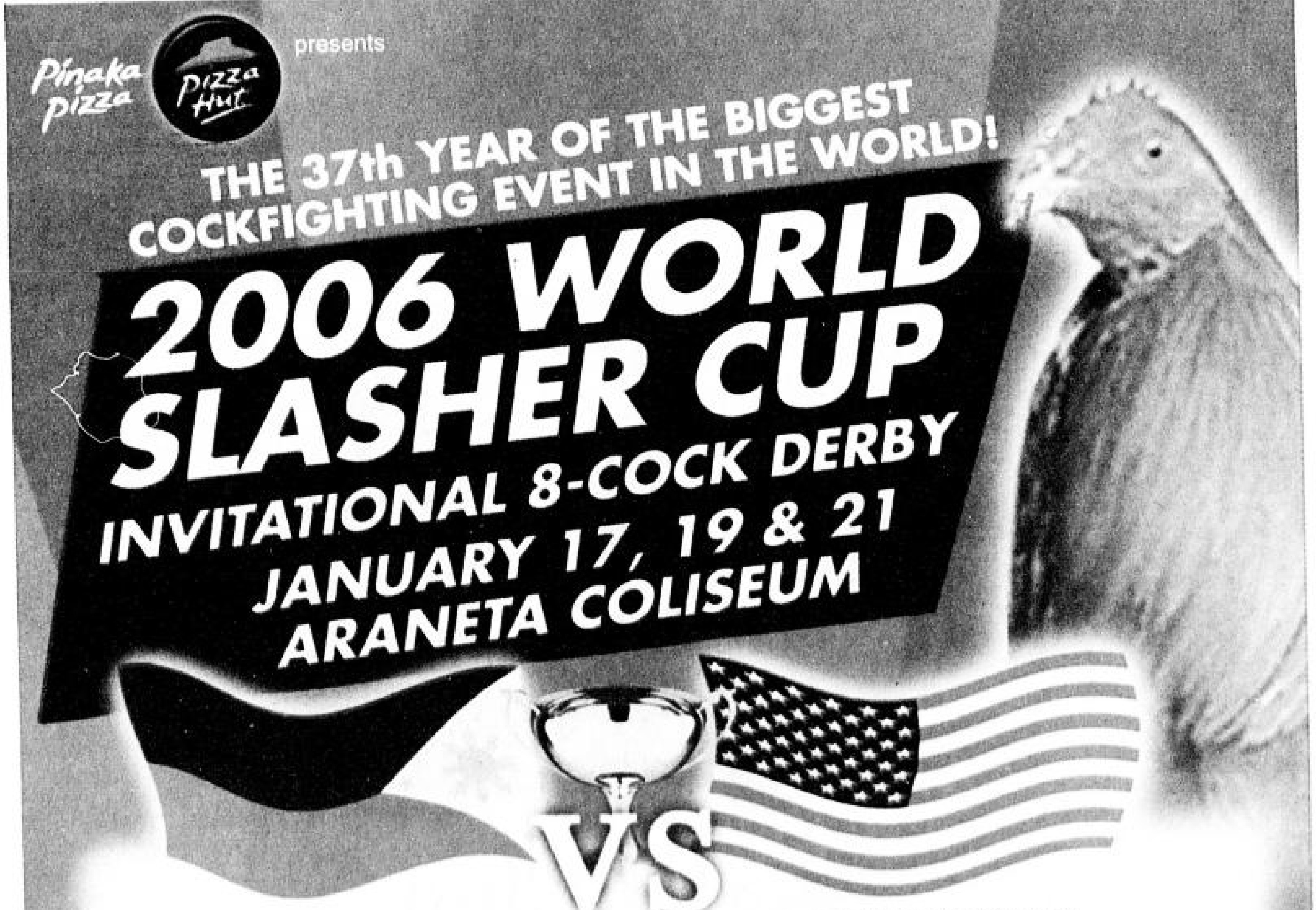

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Joel & Jet Fernando • Raymond Velayo
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Claude Bautista • Tony Tan • Peping Ricafort
Eddie Araneta • Boy de Roca • Ronnie Puno
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Alex Escalona • Patrick Puno • Philip Chiongbian
John Ty • Danny Pe • Jun Caluya • Sonny San Jose
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Elan Nagano • Paolo Malvar • and others

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Jesse Smith, OKLAHOMA • Cris Nesmith, ALABAMA
Brian Corkren, ALABAMA • Norman Blount, ALABAMA
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MARATHO
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MILO MARATHON LAUNCHED: The annual Milo Marathon will start in Kidapawan City on Jan. 29.From the usual 14 regional legs, Milo Sports Events Executive Pat Goc-ong and race organizer Rudy Biscocho have decided to stretch the 2006 season to 30 stops to celebrate the 30th year of the event. From left are Biscocho Pat Goc-Ong and Eugene David, SVP, Nestle Phil., Inc. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Rampage

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

(ENOUGH ALREADY. I WILL NOT add any further comment to the Pacquiao-Morales fever except to wish the Filipino fighter the best of luck against the ring-wise Mexican boxer who beat him the first time they met. They clash this Sunday morning (Manila time) in Las Vegas.)

* * *

PLAYING with newfound confidence, savvy and composure, Red Bull swept Alaska in the quarterfinal round and stormed into the semifinals of the San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference against crowd favorite Barangay Ginebra on Sunday at the Big Dome.

A best-of-seven affair, Sunday's opening twinbill will also pit first semifinalist Purefoods Chunkie Giants against the winner of the Talk 'N Text-Air21 series which the Express leads, 2-1, entering Game 4 tonight.

The Bulls' 3-0 victory over the Alaska Aces was a pleasant surprise to head coach Yeng Guiao. With his new import James Penny at the helm, the Photokina franchise has suddenly found itself back in the groove. "He (Penny) is the right import for us," said the 45-year-old Guiao, who last won back-to-back PBA titles in 2001-2002. "Penny's game is rubbing off his teammates. He lets the locals score if they need to," added Guiao, who will be meeting Ginebra coach Siot Tangquincen anew.

Penny is a revelation. A native of Texas, the 6-foot-5, 29-year-old Penny is not only a team player but a defensive gem as well. In taking a crucial 2-0 lead in Game 2 last Sunday at the Big Dome, Penny set a conference record of nine block shots, the most in the PBA since Benjie Paras, now retired, swatted 10 in 1991. Although he is not a big scorer compared to former Red Bull import Quemont Greer and Ginebra's Chris Porter, who averaged 31 points and 21 rebounds in his first two winning appearances here, Penny is ranked better because he has been able to bring out the best from his local teammates.

Thus far, the Bulls who have shone the brightest are sweet-shooting Lordy Tugade, the vastly-improved Enrico Villanueva, shifty Cyrus Baguio and playmaker Jimwell Torion, who displayed his signature deeds of derring-do in Game 3 despite being ordered to go home by coach Guiao during Game 2. This is a sign that Torion, whose contract ends this conference, wants an extension.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Ori/Tri)—Sweet Serenade (3), Mini Skirt (1), Ikaw Lamang (6), Chances Are (2)
Race 2—(Ori/Tri)—Wakup Forever (8), Patago (7), The Dominator (4), Ravishing Rally (2)
Race 3—(Tri)—The Strategist (5), Queen of Gaia (3), Gentleman's Lady (4)
Race 4—(Ori/Tri)—Ingay Ingay (1), Selecteo (3), Batang Kalookan (6), Jokes Only (4)
Race 5—(Ori/Tri)—Carbon Copy (2), Wynn's Connection (6), Cool Cielo (7), Sweet Chimo (3)
Race 6—(Ori/Tri)—Hurry Putter (3), Real Charm (4), Pride Of Mandaue (5), Sir Citizen (7)
Race 7—(Ori/Tri)—Twelve Or Never (4), Sharp Cookie (5), Please Don't Stop (7), Chabacana (2)
Race 8—(Ori/Tri)—Nothing Impossible (5), Gold is Gold (3), Semper Spirit (2), U Are My Sunshine (8)
Race 9—(Super/Ori/Tri)—Modern Spirit (7), Clear Stone (8), Quant Je Puis (6), Mountain Eagle (4), Friendly Venture (5), Sweet Alyssa (3)

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Seating the stars

Finding out the hard but exciting way

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—When I was asked last November if I could work in the Globes, and I said yes, I didn't have the slightest idea that the experience would be a very exciting one.

Since I was a first-time voting member of the press group that hands out these awards, I was more than glad to help. Then I learned that I was to be trained in assigning seats to the stars, and other guests. Easy? Not quite—especially when you are dealing with publicists, agents and managers.

A ticket to the Globes is one of the hottest in Hollywood. As late as Sunday (the show took place last Monday), folks were trying all sorts of tricks to get a ticket. I got a call from a man asking how he could pick up the ticket for **Paul McCartney**. I chuckled and whispered the request to my trainer, a veteran member. Without skipping a beat, she said, "Tell him the ticket was picked up yesterday."

When I put the phone down, we all had a good laugh.

Right after the dawn nominations announcement early last month at the Beverly Hills Hilton, a few of us, accompanied by a top exec from the hotel, marched into the International Ballroom, where the show is held annually, to make preliminary ar-

SEATING/ A2-5

Winning by pushing boundaries

NEW YORK—ARE THIS YEAR'S GOLDEN Globes A watershed?

Some people, like Joe Solmonese, president of the gay-rights group Human Rights Campaign, thinks so, since six awards went to movies with gay or transsexual central characters.

"It was a historic night," he told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "It says a lot about where we're going as a country. The more people live openly and honestly, the more we are simply part of the everyday fabric of Americans' lives."

But Janice Shaw Crouse of Concerned Women for America, a women's group that applies Biblical principles to public policy, maintained: "Once again, the media elites are proving that their pet projects are more important than profit."

Crouse and some 18.7 million viewers saw approving heads nod throughout the Beverly Hills ballroom Monday when Felicity Huffman accepted her Best Drama Actress award for her performance as a pre-op transsexual in "Transamerica" by saying: "I ... salute the men and women who brave ostracism, alienation and a life lived on the margins to become who they really are."

In addition to Huffman's win, the cowboy romance "Brokeback Mountain" won four Globes, including Best Dramatic picture. Philip Seymour Hoff-

WINNING/ A2-5

Red, white, black

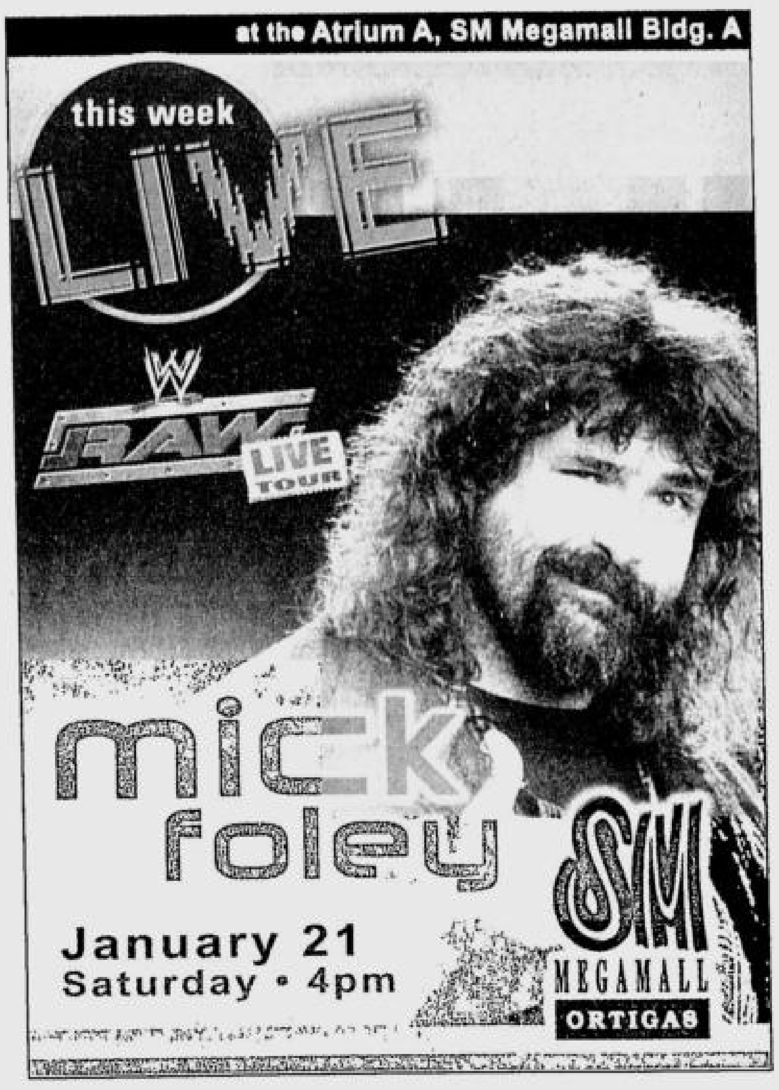
"GODESSES" RULED the Golden Globes red carpet, with stars like Felicity Huffman, Maria Bello, Hilary Swank and Marcia Cross wearing plunging V-neck halter gowns with draping, fitted waists and billowing skirts.

Huffman and Bello wore ethereal white, forecast to be a top spring fashion trend. Bello complemented her beaded Elie Saab gown with white gardenias in her hair.

Keira Knightley also wore a strapless white dress by Valentino with a rope-style belt. Sandra Oh wore a white gown with a scarf-style back.

"White was the big winner," Suze Yalof-

RED/ A2-6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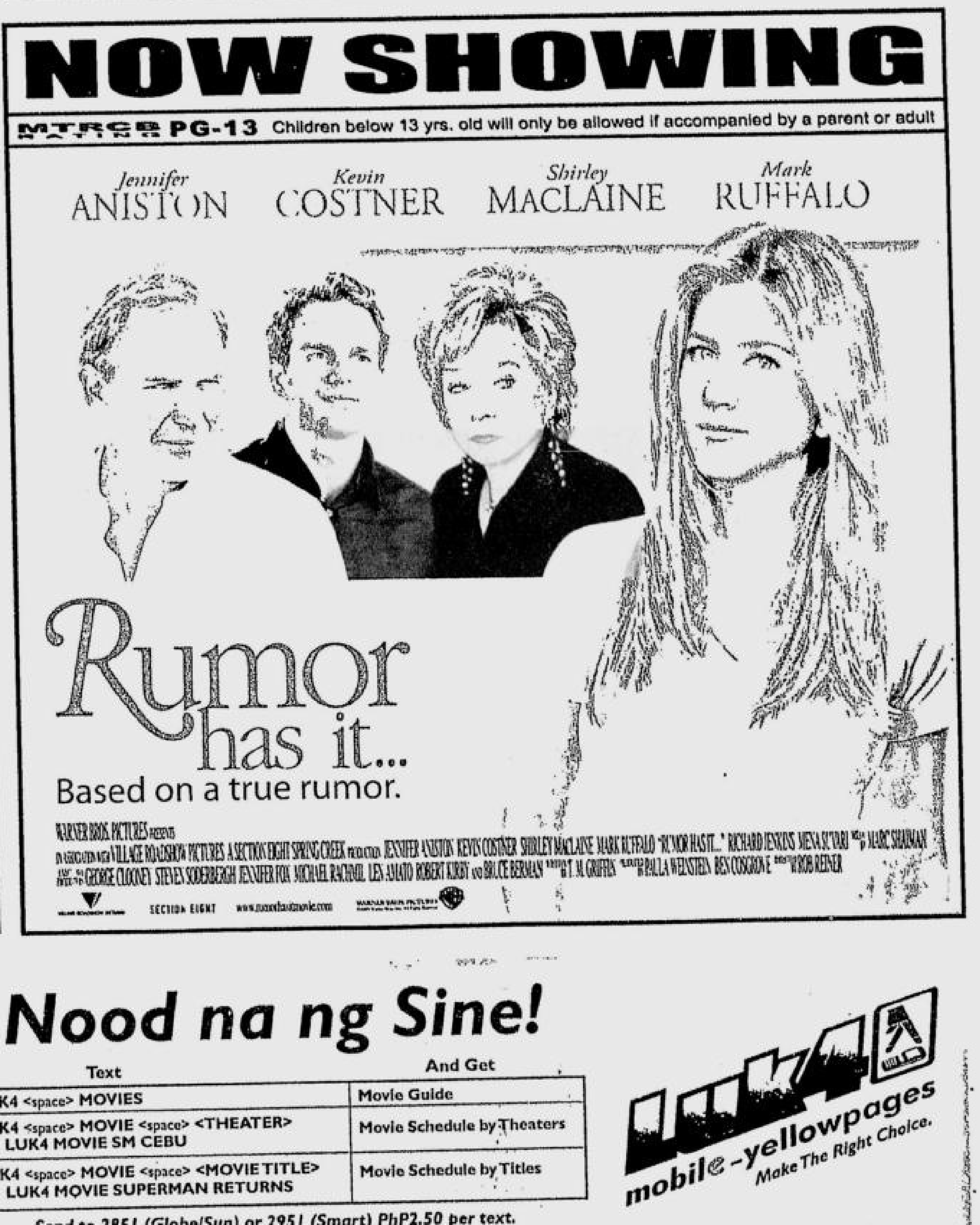
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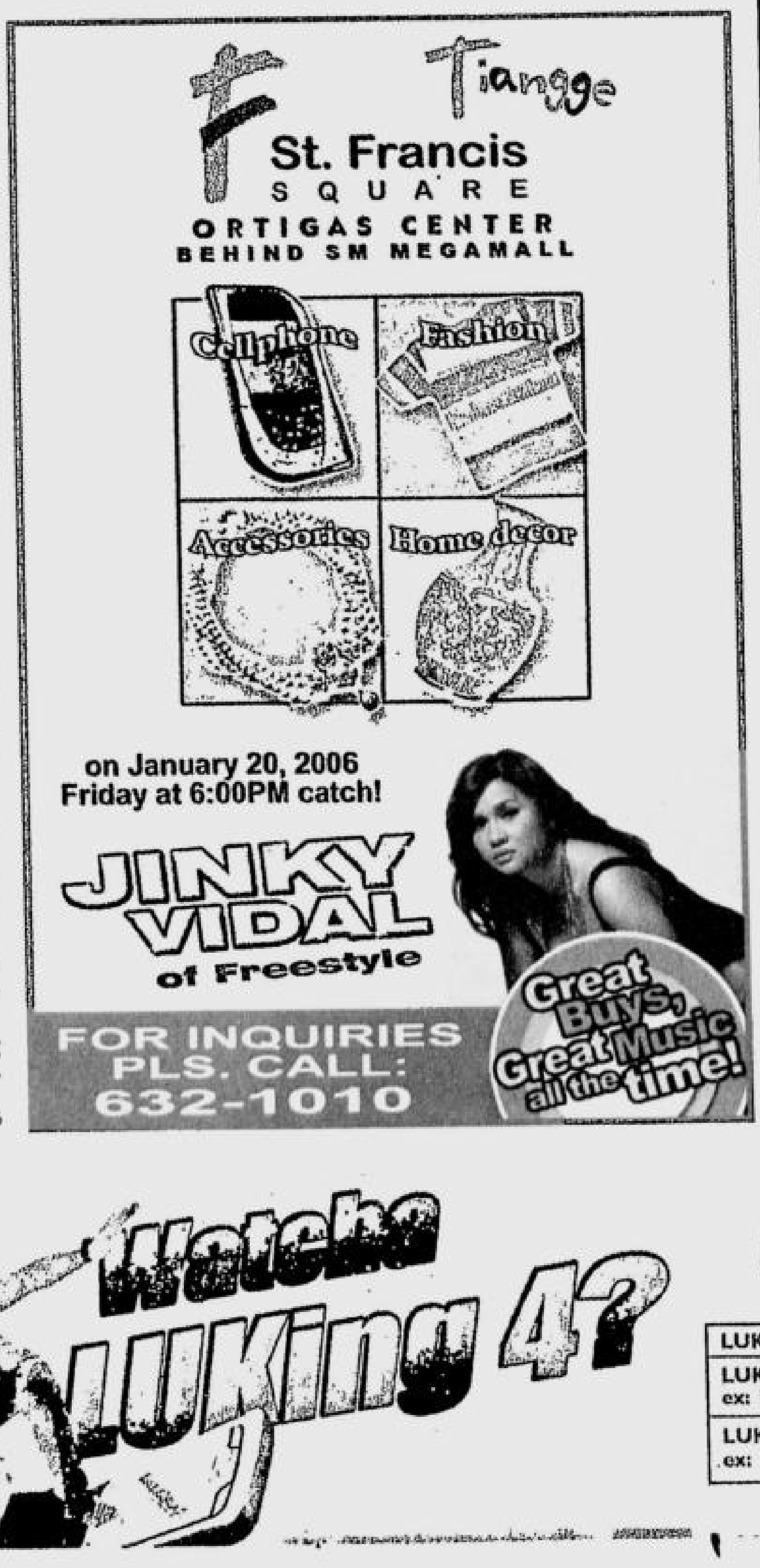
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Angel says she's not like her manager

"I DON'T need stress right now." RAFFY LERMA

By Marinel R. Cruz

"WE TRY TO TALK, BUT EACH TIME WE DO, we end up fighting. We don't want to lose respect for each other. We also don't need the added stress right now," said actress Angel Locsin, who has admitted being at odds with her talent manager.

The strained relationship between Angel and her manager, Becky Aguila, has been the subject of stories in tabloids and on entertainment talk shows for weeks now. Neither has denied having argued about the handling of the young actress' finances.

"If I want to say something to her, I won't broadcast it on radio and TV or have it printed in newspapers," Angel told INQUIRER Entertainment over lunch on Wednesday. "I'm not that kind of person. Unlike her, *bigla na lang nagpa*-interview."

Long and winding

She added: "We really should have kept the problem between us from the start. I appeared on 'Startalk' only to answer questions brought forth because of issues she raised in newspapers. *Pero hindi ko s'ya tinira; hindi ako 'yung maglalaglag ng tao* on national TV."

The actress said that while she is still bound by the contract she signed with Aguila, it is now Artist Center, GMA 7's talent arm, that handles her schedules.

"*Magulo at mahabang usapin 'yan* (It would take a long and winding discussion)," Angel said of her disagreement with Aguila. "In time, people will find out who is telling the truth. Right now, I'm just leaving everything to God."

Whenever she faces difficult times in her career, Angel said, she turns to her father for advice. "I'm still his baby girl," she said. "I make sure he knows everything I do. He said he was surprised when he found out about the situation. I don't normally cry in front of him. I want to always be strong for him."

Keep quiet

She added: "Daddy told me not to think too much about it anymore. He told me to just keep quiet."

Angel said she also runs to her friends whenever she is anxious. She considers Valerie Concepcion and Danica Sotto, sister of her rumored boyfriend Oyo Boy, as her most trusted friends in show biz.

"I pray to God whenever I can, wherever I am," she added. "I don't like thinking negative about other people."

The lunch on Wednesday was to launch the new online game, PristonTale, which Angel endorses. PristonTale is operated locally by NetPlay.

For kids

"After doing 'Darna' and 'Mulawin,' I discovered that my followers are kids, teenagers and the young at heart. I want to endorse something that has a positive effect on them. *Kung baga sa pelikula, dapat* GP *s'ya*. Of course, the product has to be something I like," explained Angel. "I'm not really into web games, but I'm excited about this one, especially when I found out that there are characters here that female players could relate to."

Angel is also busy with promoting Mac Alejandre's "I Will Always Love You," where she co-stars with Richard Gutierrez. The actress said she is especially proud of the scenes shot last year in San Francisco, CA.

"The trip was very memorable for me," said Angel, who was hospitalized for dengue fever and bronchitis while abroad. "[But] we had to re-shoot some of the scenes because the negatives were damaged."

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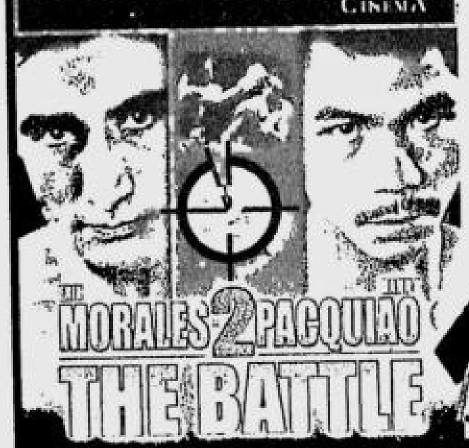
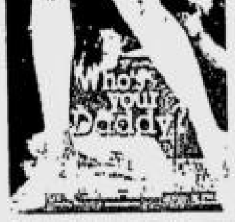


movietime SCHEDULE AND EVENTS
RED CARPET PREMIERE
ZATHURA
•Megamall January 21• Cinema 1
BIG TIME
•Megamall January 23• Cinema 1
THE MAID
•Megamall January 24• Cinema 1
SM CINEMA movietime EXCLUSIVE
Who's your Daddy?
A teenager inherits his dad's adult magazine, not one issue... but the whole company!



QUARANTEED SEATS
THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 RUMOR HAS IT 11:40FS/12:05MF/02:15 03:55LFS/04:25LMF/06:05END
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA 11:40FS/12:00MF 02:20LFS/02:50LMF/05:10END
MEGAMALL
1 UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION 11:15FS/11:40MF/01:55/04:10/06:25 08:10LFS/08:40LMF/10:25END
CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA 11:00FS/11:10MF/01:45/04:20/06:55 09:15LFS/09:30LMF/11:50END
2 UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION 11:20FS/11:30MF/01:30/03:30/05:30/07:30 09:20LFS/09:30LMF/11:20END
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE 11:35FS/11:50MF/02:15/04:40/07:05 09:05LFS/09:30LMF/11:30END

METRO MANILA
SM MEGAMALL
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 RUMOR HAS IT
3 UNDERWORLD 2
4 KING KONG
5 LITTLE MANHATTAN
6 NARNIA
7 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
8 AKO LEGAL WIFE
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
11 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
12 BLUE MOON
SM CITY STA. MESA
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 NARNIA
3 KING KONG
4 RUMOR HAS IT
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 AKO LEGAL WIFE
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
8 LITTLE MANHATTAN
9 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
10 BLUE MOON
SM CITY BICUTAN
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 NARNIA
4 KING KONG
SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 NARNIA
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 AKO LEGAL WIFE
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 LITTLE MANHATTAN
4 UNDERWORLD 2
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 KING KONG
7 UNDERWORLD 2
8 NARNIA
9 RUMOR HAS IT
10 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
11 BLUE MOON
12 EXODUS
SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 RUMOR HAS IT
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 NARNIA
5 LITTLE MANHATTAN
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
8 KING KONG
9 ST. ANGE
10 RESERVED
SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 NARNIA
SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 KING KONG
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 AKO LEGAL WIFE
5 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
6 LITTLE MANHATTAN
7 RUMOR HAS IT
8 NARNIA
SM CITY MANILA
1 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
2 RUMOR HAS IT
3 KING KONG
4 NARNIA
5 LITTLE MANHATTAN
6 UNDERWORLD 2
7 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
8 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
9 UNDERWORLD 2
10 AKO LEGAL WIFE
11 BLUE MOON
12 ST. ANGE
SM CITY SAN LAZARO
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 NARNIA
3 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
4 BLUE MOON
5 RUMOR HAS IT
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

LUZON
SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 NARNIA
2 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
3 IN HER SHOES
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 RESERVED
SM CITY BAGUIO
1 NARNIA
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 IN HER SHOES
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO
1 NARNIA
2 ST. ANGE
3 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
SM CITY BACOOR
1 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 NARNIA
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
5 UNDERWORLD 2
6 PETA
7 BLUE MOON
8 KING KONG
SM CITY MARILAO
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
2 NARNIA
3 THE MAN
4 ST. ANGE
SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 NARNIA
2 THE MAN
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 ST. ANGE
SM CITY LUCENA
1 NARNIA
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 THE MAN
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
SM CITY BATANGAS
1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 NARNIA
4 THE MAN

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO
SM CITY CEBU
1 NARNIA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 IN HER SHOES
5 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
6 KING KONG
7 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
8 NARNIA
SM CITY ILOILO
1 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
2 RESERVED
3 NARNIA
4 PRIME
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
7 RESERVED
8 IN HER SHOES
SM CITY DAVAO
1 NARNIA
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 IN HER SHOES
5 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
6 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 NARNIA
2 BLUE MOON
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION (Subject to MTRCB Rating) 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
2 CHRONICLES OF NARNIA MTRCB: GP 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20
3 RUMOR HAS IT MTRCB: PG-13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
4 JARHEAD MTRCB: R-18 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
PREMIERE THEATRE LITTLE MANHATTAN
MTRCB GP 12:40, 2:45, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00
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CINEMA 1 JARHEAD R18 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
CINEMA 2 NARNIA GP 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
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CINEMA 3 UNDERWORLD R13 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00
CINEMA 4 LITTLE MANHATTAN-GP 11:40, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:25, 10:35
CINEMA 5 RUMOR HAS IT PG13 11:00, 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 8:20, 10:35
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.
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UNDERWORLD 2 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40
GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
RUMOR HAS IT 12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30
FAMILY STONE 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40
NARNIA 1:10 / 4:00 / 6:50 / 9:40
UNDERWORLD 2 2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00
LITTLE MANHATTAN 12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30
BLUE MOON 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
JARHEAD 1:55 / 4:30 / 7:05 / 9:40
ONLY P120 ADMISSION GLOBE PLATINUM P240/P299
ALIMALL CINEMAS
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US 12:45 / 3:15 / 5:45 / 8:15
2 UNDERWORLD 2 1:10 / 3:30 / 5:50 / 8:10
3 NARNIA 12:00 / 2:40 / 5:20 / 8:00
4 UNANG TIKIM 12:10 / 2:10 / 4:10 / 6:10 / 8:10
5 JARHEAD 12:35 / 3:10 / 5:45 / 8:20
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BACKSTREET BOYS NEVER GONE TOUR JANUARY 20 FRIDAY/8PM
WORLD SLASHER CUP JANUARY 21 CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

One in a kind and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: OF ALL THE STARS WE HAVE, WHY DID you decide to cast (name of star) in your production?

Guest: It's easy to see why by just looking at her—she's only one in a kind!

(What do you *mean?*)

* * *

Host: What did you finish in college?

Guest: No college, no *aral* for me, *kasi pina*-drop off *ako.*

(*Ano daw?*)

* * *

Host: How will you promote your new album in a different way?

Guest: Oh, a different way is, we will have a lunching show!

(We hope it's held at noon!)

* * *

Host: How old were you when you first started acting on TV? Did you start as a child actor?

Guest: I was already going up 13.

(Ah, so…)

* * *

Host: People say you're shy, so you won't make it in show business?

Guest: No, I like performing. My problem is, *hindi lang ako sanay sa* public people!

(*Ay, sa* public people!)

* * *

Host: What is your advice for people who bear grudges against others?

Guest: You have to stop, it's like poison! You must promise to learn to forgive and forget other people!

(*Huwag naman*—forgive, but don't forget them!)

* * *

Host: How do you help your hapsisters?

Guest: I help all my stefsister with education.

(—What a strange pair you make.)

* * *

Host: Of all the things you have and are, what's the most important to you?

Guest: What's important is my compassionate, *po.*

(Oh, that!)

* * *

Host: What do you think of (name of starlet).

Guest: She's beautiful, I like her—*kaya lang, parang mahirap siyang i*-approach!

* * *

Host: What does it take for a young woman to be accepted as a candidate in this beauty pageant?

Guest: She has to be smart, beautiful—and look good in bathing shoes!

(What in the world are bathing shoes?)

* * *

Host: So, are you going to get married this year?

Guest: I already answered that, as I said *kanina*, a while ago.

(—*Kulit!*)

* * *

Host: Some say that you are the successor of (name of veteran star). How do you feel when people tell you that?

Guest: Oh, I'm so honored to be mentioned in the same name!

(You mean, the same breath?)

Fantasy films rule

THE PHILIPPINES isn't the only country where fantasy movies rule. In the United States, two of the biggest hits are "King Kong" and "The Chronicles of Narnia," which both stress the magical and employ a lot of special effects.

And, hot on their heels, a veritable cornucopia of other fantasy-adventure productions are lining up for the best playdates during the first quarter of 2006.

Coming soon is "Pirates of the Caribbean 2: Dead Man's Chest." Stars **Johnny Depp** and **Keira Knightly** reunite in a new screen caper chronicling the further misadventures of Capt. Jack Sparrow. The emerging film franchise is so successful that a third installment was filmed along with the second—shades of "Lord of the Rings"!

"X-Men 3" follows the new adventures of superpowered group led by Professor Xavier: A geneticist finds a "cure" for the mutation found in the "X-Men," and Hawk McCoy, known as "The Beast" (Kelsey Grammer), finds hope in achieving his desire to be fully human.

And "The Shaggy Dog" casts **Tim Allen** as a lawyer whose devotion to his career comes at the expense of his family. His transformation into a dog hampers his career, but teaches him how to be a better father and husband.

Students' choice awards tonight

THE SECOND USTV STUDENTS' CHOICE Awards, the awards for excellence and Christian values on television by the University of Santo Tomas, will be held tonight at the UST Medicine Auditorium.

Rector Magnificus Rev. Tamerlane Lana, O.P. will lead the awards rites that start at 6.

This year's theme is: "Tele-Tomasino: A Critical Appreciation of Television."

The awards, organized by the Office of the Secretary General and student leaders of UST, will cover TV programs aired between May 2004 and September 2005. Criteria include competence, quality of programming, and the promotion of the Thomasian vision of truth with charity.

Voters in the awards are the 30,000-strong student body of the Pontifical University. The board of judges includes Fr. Rolando V. de la Rosa, O.P., former chairman of the Commission on Higher Education; Fr. Isidro Abaño, UST secretary general; Henrietta de Villa, former ambassador to the Holy See; Fr. Romulo Rodriguez, O.P., regent of the UST College of Education; Crispina Martinez Belen, entertainment editor of the Manila Bulletin; Bong Osorio, president of Campaigns and Grey advertising and columnist of the Philippine Star; and Lito Zulueta, arts and culture editor of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and chair of the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino.

Nominees

The nominees are: "24 Oras," "Insider," "TV Patrol World" (news program); Arnold Clavio, Mike Enriquez, Ted Failon (male broadcast news and public affairs host); Karen Davila, Korina Sanchez, Mel Tiangco (female broadcast news and public affairs host); "Imbestigador," "Magandang Gabi, Bayan," "The Correspondents" (documentary

STUDENTS'/A2-5

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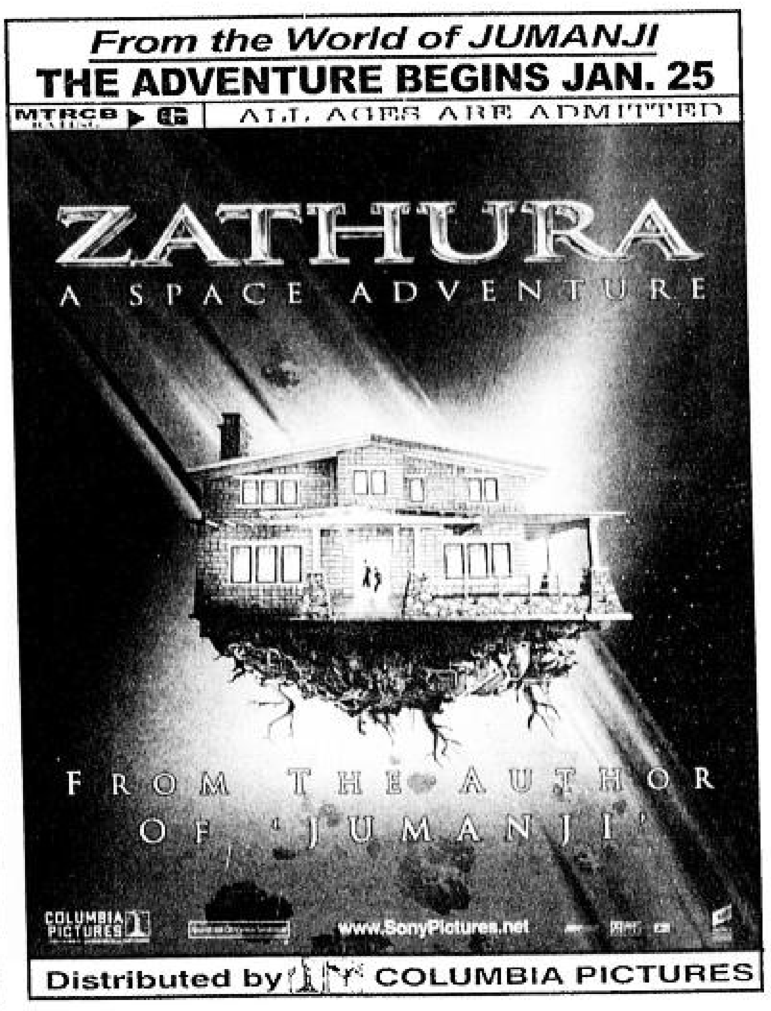
1 UNDERWORLD 2 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 R-13
2 CHRONICLES OF NARNIA 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30 GP
3 RUMOR HAS IT 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 PG-13
4 JARHEAD 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00 R-18



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LITTLE MANHATTAN GP 12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00	RUMOR HAS IT PG13 1:25,3:35,5:45, 7:55,10:05	CHRONICLES OF NARNIA GP 1:05,4:05,7:05,10:05
JARHEAD R18 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15	FAMILY STONE PG13 12:20,2:40,5:00, 7:20,9:40	UNDERWORLD 2: EVOLUTION R13 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:20

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1 (DOLBY) UNDERWORLD PG13
2 (DOLBY) CHRONICLES OF NARNIA GP
3 (DOLBY) RUMOR HAS IT PG13
4 (DOLBY) JARHEAD R18
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) LITTLE MANHATTAN GP

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1 (DDS) UNDERWORLD-2
2 (SDDS) KING KONG
3 (DTS) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 GOLD (DTS) RUMOR HAS IT
5 GOLD THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
6 GOLD (SDDS) UNDERWORLD-2
7 GOLD (DOLBY) LITTLE MANHATAN
8 (DOLBY STEREO) DON'T GIVE UP ON US
9 (DOLBY STEREO) JARHEAD
10 (DOLBY STEREO) AKO LEGAL WIFE

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
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tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION
2 (DOLBY) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 (DOLBY) RUMOR HAS IT
4 (DOLBY) JARHEAD

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Movie Theatres of the New Millenium
Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 BLUE MOON
2 (DTS) DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DOLBY) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 FAMILY STONE
Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 KUTOB
2 (DOLBY) FAMILY STONE
3 (DTS) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DOLBY) BLUE MOON
Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 BLUE MOON
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DOLBY) EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 (DTS) JUST LIKE HEAVEN
Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 BLUE MOON
3 (DOLBY) DON'T GIVE UP ON US
Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan)
1 BLUE MOON
2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 RUMOR HAS IT
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 (DOLBY) RUMOR HAS IT
3 (DOLBY) DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 (DOLBY) UNDERWORLD-2

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) UNDERWORLD-2
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 JARHEAD
5 UNANG TIKIM

starmall EDSA • SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
5 UNDERWORLD 2

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
4 RESERVED

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www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 6433994
1 UNANG TIKIM
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 UNDERWORLD-2

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 . 833.3274
1 UNDERWORLD-2
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue
(Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan
Telephone No. (044) 600-3025
1 THE FOG
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 BLUE MOON

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) BLUE MOON
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DTS EX) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 IN HER SHOES

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
2 BLUE MOON
3 (DOLBY) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 (DTS) IN HER SHOES

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IN HER SHOES
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO

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(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
2 BLUE MOON
3 (DOLBY) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 (DTS) IN HER SHOES

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BLUE MOON
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4746
1 KUTOB
2 MULAWIN
Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) KING KONG
2 MORNING GIRL
3 UNANG TIKIM
4 (DTS) BLOODFISH
Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 MORNING GIRL
3 (DTS) BLUE MOON
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
5 UNANG TIKIM

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 FAMILY STONE
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 NARNIA
2 BLOODFISH

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 UNDERWORLD 2 • THX
12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00

2 UNDERWORLD 2
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

3 The Chronicles of NARNIA
11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

4 JARHEAD
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

5 LITTLE MANHATTAN
11:35 1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00

6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50

7 KING KONG
2:30 6:00 9:30

8 RUMOR HAS IT
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

9 THE FAMILY STONE
12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50

10 AKO LEGAL WIFE 12:20 2:45
BLUE MOON 5:10 7:35 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 UNDERWORLD 2
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

2 LITTLE MANHATTAN
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 JARHEAD
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
11:30 1:35 3:40 5:45 7:50 10:00

5 The Chronicles of NARNIA
12.50 3:50 6:50 9:50

6 RUMOR HAS IT
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

7 KING KONG 11:00 2:20
SAINT ANGE 6:10 8:00 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 JARHEAD
1:05 3:40 6:15 9:00

2 UNDERWORLD 2
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:15

4 RUMOR HAS IT
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

5 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00

6 BLUE MOON
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

8 KING KONG
1:30 5:05 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 The Chronicles of NARNIA
2 JARHEAD
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 UNDERWORLD 2
5 KING KONG

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 The Chronicles of NARNIA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 JARHEAD
4 RUMOR HAS IT

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Cinema 1 The Chronicles of NARNIA
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Cinema 3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
Cinema 4 UNDERWORLD 2
Cinema 5 KING KONG

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1 The Chronicles of NARNIA
2 THE FAMILY STONE
3 SAINT ANGE
4 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

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1 The Chronicles of NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
4 IN HER SHOES
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 JARHEAD
2 SAINT ANGE
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 The Chronicles of NARNIA
5 IN HER SHOES

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2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 BLUE MOON
4 IN HER SHOES

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2 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
3 The Chronicles of NARNIA
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3 PRIME
4 IN HER SHOES
5 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
6 The Chronicles of NARNIA

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1 The Chronicles of NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 THE FAMILY STONE
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
6 BEAUTIFUL BOXER

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AYALA CINEMAS

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA	2 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	3 RUMOR HAS IT	4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 RUMORS HAS IT	2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US	3 THX THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA 1.30, 4 30, 7 30 10 30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 JARHEAD	5 LITTLE MANHATTAN	6 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	7 THE FAMILY STONE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 RUMORS HAS IT 11:30, 1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30	2 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION 11:30, 1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA 2:00, 5:00, 8:00, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9.05, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	3 JARHEAD 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 LITTLE MANHATTAN 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 RUMOR HAS IT 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9 05, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA	3 RUMOR HAS IT	4 JARHEAD	5 LITTLE MANHATTAN		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA	3 IN HER SHOES	4 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE			

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② LITTLE MANHATTAN
③ DON'T GIVE UP ON US
④ THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
⑤ RUMOR HAS IT...

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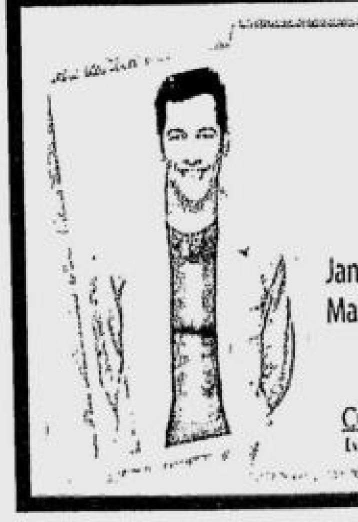

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STAR RECORDS

GENESIS

Seating the stars

From page A2-1

rangements. I was asked to walk around to "feel the place."

After the holidays, we went to work, assigning tables and seats to more than 1,000 guests. Nominees from the film categories, A-list presenters and guests got spots in what is called the pit—the section closest to the stage.

The other film nominees and TV nominees were assigned to the next tier. The third tier was designated to the rest of the guests.

Simple? No way. Over the next couple of weeks, until a day before the event, stars and studios and their accomplices were calling, dropping by, faxing or e-mailing requests for switches. It became, let's say, "intense."

An actress—or her handlers—kept changing the group and table that she wanted to join (the show is aired in more than 150 countries). Another actress couldn't supply the name of her date or guest until the last minute. Was she desperately looking for one?

Several actors, through their publicists, wanted to know who were sitting next to them.

The other half of a divorced star couple asked where her ex was sitting. We presumed they were not in good terms, so they were placed on opposite sides of the room. It turned out that they were in good terms but my trainer was adamant—no changes, please!

This colleague of mine is firm, which is what is needed in her position because there's incredible pressure from all directions. She virtually knew who was sitting where in the vast ballroom!

She stood her ground when a relative found out that his kin (the two are powerful in the biz) was going to be seated on a lower level. He demanded that he be moved to the first tier, too, but his request was turned down.

An actor's manager kept calling almost every day, dying to be invited. As we say, *kung may tiyaga, may nilaga*. A day before the show, the actor's rep called again and fortunately for him, a couple of seats became available. He willingly paid $1,200 for the hot two tickets (prime ones are sold at $600 each).

Meeting Pamela

Oh yes, the nominees do pay $600 each. But it's usually the studios or TV companies who cough up the dough for the prestige to be at Hollywood's party of the year. Only a few get comp tickets—the presenters do, for example (and get the extra special goodie bags which are estimated to be worth at least $62,000 each this year).

So when a star was making *pakipot* about sitting at the table of the studio that was going to fly her in and pay for her ticket, a mogul declared, "Yes, she will sit at my table!"

A few days before the big day, we moved our office to a room right beside the ballroom venue. The entire show was rehearsed again and again with stand-ins for the stars. When a "winner's name" was called, the individual standing in for that certain nominee stood up, walked to the stage and gave an acceptance speech.

A day before the show, the presenters showed up for practice at staggered times (the schedule was amazingly followed to the minute). On their way out, some celebrities dropped by to personally get their tickets. I personally handed **Pamela Anderson** hers. I'm sure many guys would trade places with me for the pleasure of asking Pamela to sign the receipt. Wearing an unbuttoned white cotton shirt and a sheer bra underneath, the actress had to bend as she printed and signed her name.

HBO began partially covering the pool in preparation for its party right after the show. A man in scuba suit assembled the underwater steel foundation for the temporary wooden floor. The sight was an interesting distraction from the last-minute struggles to switch seats or to plead for a ticket (one man came and made a plea in near tears).

Since this was a high-profile event, I heard that the FBI wanted a copy of the guest list. Security was tight at the event—even the parking and limo passes had chips that identified the bearers of these passes. On the day itself, police dogs came to sniff for bombs.

On Sunday, my rambling notes on the big day itself—or scenes that the TV cameras couldn't have caught.

(E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.)

Winning by pushing boundaries

From page A2-1

man won Best Dramatic Actor as gay writer Truman Capote in "Capote."

Still, there's been some resistance to the films. "Brokeback" was pulled earlier from a Utah theater. Comedian Larry David, who co-created "Seinfeld" and has aligned himself with liberal causes, wrote a humorous op-ed piece for The New York Times, averring: "I just don't want to watch two straight men, alone on the prairie, fall in love and kiss and hug and hold hands and whatnot ... not that there's anything wrong with that."

"When people can be honest about ... sexual orientation as just one part of their life, then we can move past the unknown," said Neil Giuliano, president of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. "That's what these films have significantly helped America see."

Jake Coyle, AP

Students' choice awards

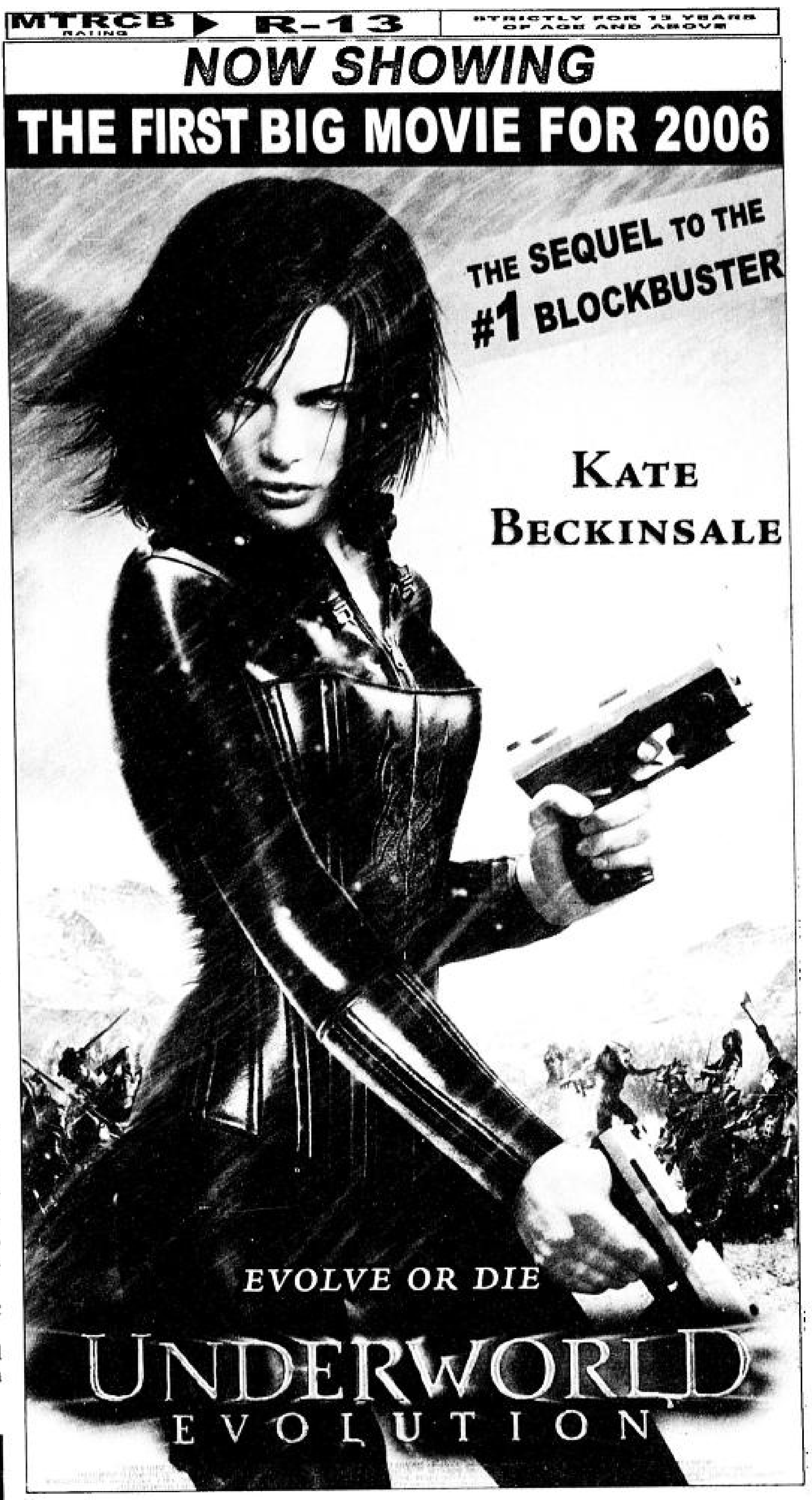
From page A2-3

program); "Debate with Mare and Pare," "Dong Puno Live," and "Y-Speak" (public affairs talk show); "3R," "F," and "Rated-K" (magazine program); "Art Angel," "Art Jam," "Sineskwela" (educational program); "Bubble Gang," "Goin' Bulilit," "Nuts Entertainment" (comedy);

"Asap '05," "Eat... Bulaga!" and "Wowwowee" (variety program); "Full House," "Lovers in Paris," "Memories of Bali" (foreign soap opera); "Extra Challenge," "Star Circle Quest," "Starstruck" (reality program); "S-Files," "Startalk," "The Buzz" (entertainment news show); "Maalaala Mo Kaya?" and "Magpakailanman" (drama program); "Mga Angel na Walang Langit," "Encantadia," "Kampanerang Kuba" (drama mini-series); John Lloyd Cruz for "Ikaw ang Lahat sa Akin," Richard Gutierrez for "Sugo," Dennis Trillo for "Darna" (actor, drama mini-series); and Claudine Barretto for "Ikaw ang Lahat sa Akin," Iza Calzado for "Encantadia," Angel Locsin for "Darna" (actress, drama mini-series).

There will also be an award for best music video.

The TV station that wins the most awards will be declared USTV Students' Choice for Television Station of the Year.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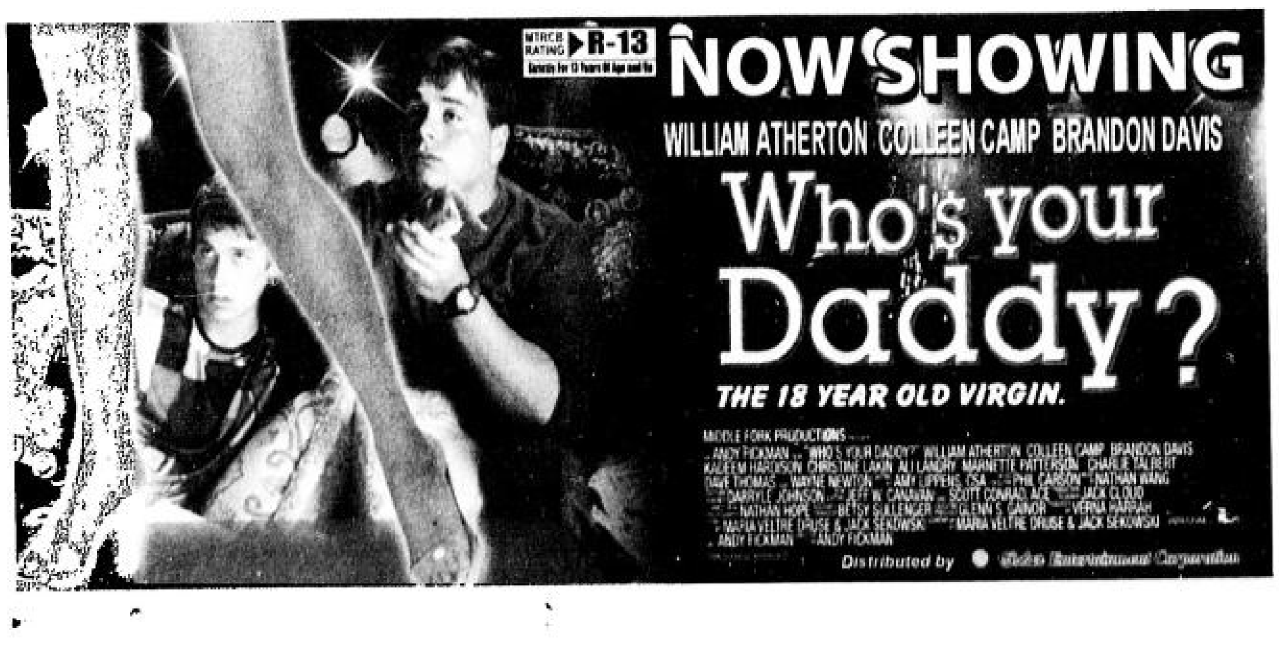
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Red, white, black

From page A2-1

Schwartz of Glamour magazine said from the red carpet.

Kate Beckinsale's white dress from the Dior archives was dainty and elegant. Reese Witherspoon's short vintage Chanel haute couture was a champagne color. Cross' dress was coral, providing a stunning contrast to her red hair.

Red also showed a strong presence: Scarlett Johansson wore a red scoop neck Valentino with soft ruffles on the straps and down the back; Geena Davis wore a strapless Escada with a jeweled bustier top; Laura Linney had an asymmetrical version.

Eva Longoria complemented her red Grecian wrap by Bob Mackie with gold platform shoes.

Equally bright was Ziyi Zhang's Armani lime green silk tulle gown with a sweetheart neckline and floor-sweeping train.

But some of fashion's favorite faces stuck with classic black.

Sarah Jessica Parker was in a strapless dress with tiny rows of tulle by Rochas. Dior's John Galliano designed a custom cocktail dress for Charlize Theron that featured black lace over nude tulle. Swank's black dress by Jean Yu had a sexy back with several straps, and Mary-Louise Parker's had a plunging V-front.

Natalie Portman looked Audrey Hepburnesque in a vintage Chanel black lace bustier dress. Renee Zellweger remained loyal to designer Carolina Herrera, wearing an asymmetrical black silk chiffon dress with a leg-length slit up the left thigh.

Teri Hatcher wore a body-hugging V-neck bronze halter gown with art deco-style beading.

Gwyneth Paltrow's overall look was very soft. Her white Balenciaga tiered gown embraced her pregnant belly instead of hiding it and her hair was up with soft waves.

"The Globes set the fashion tone for the rest of the season," designer Randolph Duke told the Associated Press. "It's a very chic show." *AP*

FELICITY Huffman JANET SUSAN R. NEPALES

SANDRA Oh JANET SUSAN R. NEPALES

RENEE Zellweger in Carolina Herrera; Geena Davis (inset) in Escada HFPA

SARAH Jessica Parker HFPA

EVA Longoria JANET SUSAN R. NEPALES

MARIA Bello HFPA

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3 foreign acts for Pinoy fans tonight

SHOW TIME

THREE FOREIGN ACTS entertain local fans tonight—Backstreet Boys, Jason Mraz, and Gabe Lapano with Pat Upton.

Mraz has a two night engagement—tonight at the Rockwell Tent and tomorrow night at the NBC Tent. For tickets, call 911-5555.

Lapano, Cascades lead singer and songwriter, shares the stage with Upton of Spiral Starecase, who stars in "More Today Than Yesterday," a three-night series, —tonight at Aliw Theater, tomorrow at the Manila Hotel, and Jan. 22 at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu. Tickets available at Ticketworld, Tower Records, Robinsons and Ayala Malls Box Office.

Backstreet Boys perform at the **Araneta Coliseum.** Call 911-5555.

Tonight

Pilita Corrales, the **UP Singing Ambassadors, Boy Camara** and **Tenor Dondi Ong,** sopranos **Nanette Moscardon Maigue** and **Aileen Cura** pay tribute to "The Music of Dick Zamora... Love Songs" at **Paco Park;** 5:30 p.m.

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JANUARY 15 to FEBRUARY 2
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JANUARY 21, SATURDAY
An Acrobatic Presentation by Golden Red Lion & Dragon
2pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

Chinese Folk & Fairytales Storytelling
3pm, Art Plaza, Level 4

Chinese Dance Presentation by Chiang Kai Shek College
5pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

JANUARY 21 to JANUARY 22
Feng Shui Reading with Prof. Charlie Chao
2-6pm, in front of Figaro, Level 3
Present an accumulated or single receipt, single day purchase worth P2,500 on January 21 & 22 to avail of FREE Feng Shui Reading
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JANUARY 22, SUNDAY
Dragon & Lion Dance and Martial Arts Exhibition by Philippine Ling Nam Athletic Federation
1-4pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

Chinese Calligraphy Demo by Mr. Jason Que
3-6pm, Level 1, Shaw Blvd. Exhibit area

JANUARY 27, FRIDAY
Chinese Retrospective Films Special
Premiere Theatre, Shang Cineplex, Level 6
Special rate - P88 per ticket (without food & drinks)

JANUARY 28, SATURDAY
Chinese Calligraphy Demo by Mr. Jason Que
3pm, Art Plaza, Level 4

Chiang Kai Shek Chorale
5pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

Dynamic Youth Chorale
7pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

Fireworks Display
12mn, Streetscape

JANUARY 29, SUNDAY
Dragon & Lion Dance Exhibition by Golden Lion Youth Club
2pm, Grand Atrium, Level 2

Chinese Craft Making for Kids
4pm, Art Plaza, Level 4

STREETSCAPE Shows - 9:30pm
Jan. 20 - Liquified Orange
Jan. 21 - Classified
Jan. 27 - Sould Out
Jan. 28 - Rockin Revival

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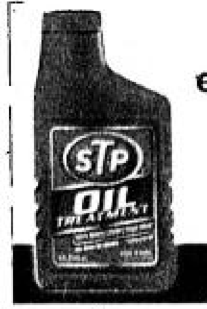

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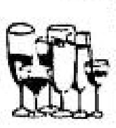

Council of State, BSP style /B3

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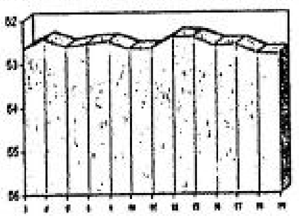

JANUARY

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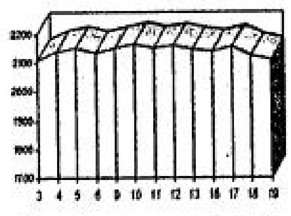
¥115.20 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 19, 2006

GOLD: $547.80-548.30
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 19, 2006

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B5)

Share prices down 0.77% on rising oil concerns

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 0.77 percent lower due to rising oil prices and fresh political concerns about possible threats to President Macapagal-Arroyo's hold on power, dealers said.

The composite index fell 16.37 points to 2,109.08 after trading between 2,106.61

SHARE/ B5

Nestlé in ₱2.5-B expansion

Food giant also seen to push local coffee production

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NESTLÉ PHILIPPINES INC. HAS SET ASIDE SOME P2.5 BILLION in capital expenses for the modernization and expansion of its production plants, according to a company executive.

NPI chair Nandu Nandkishore yesterday said the fund would go to the upgrade, capacity expansion, environmental compliance requirements and other needs of the firm's various facilities.

The company has manufacturing plants in Cabuyao, Laguna; Lipa, Batangas; Pulilan, Bulacan; as well as in Cagayan de Oro, Quezon City and Marikina City.

Nandkishore, who is also the company president and chief executive, said NPI annually had been laying out at least P2 billion over the past few years.

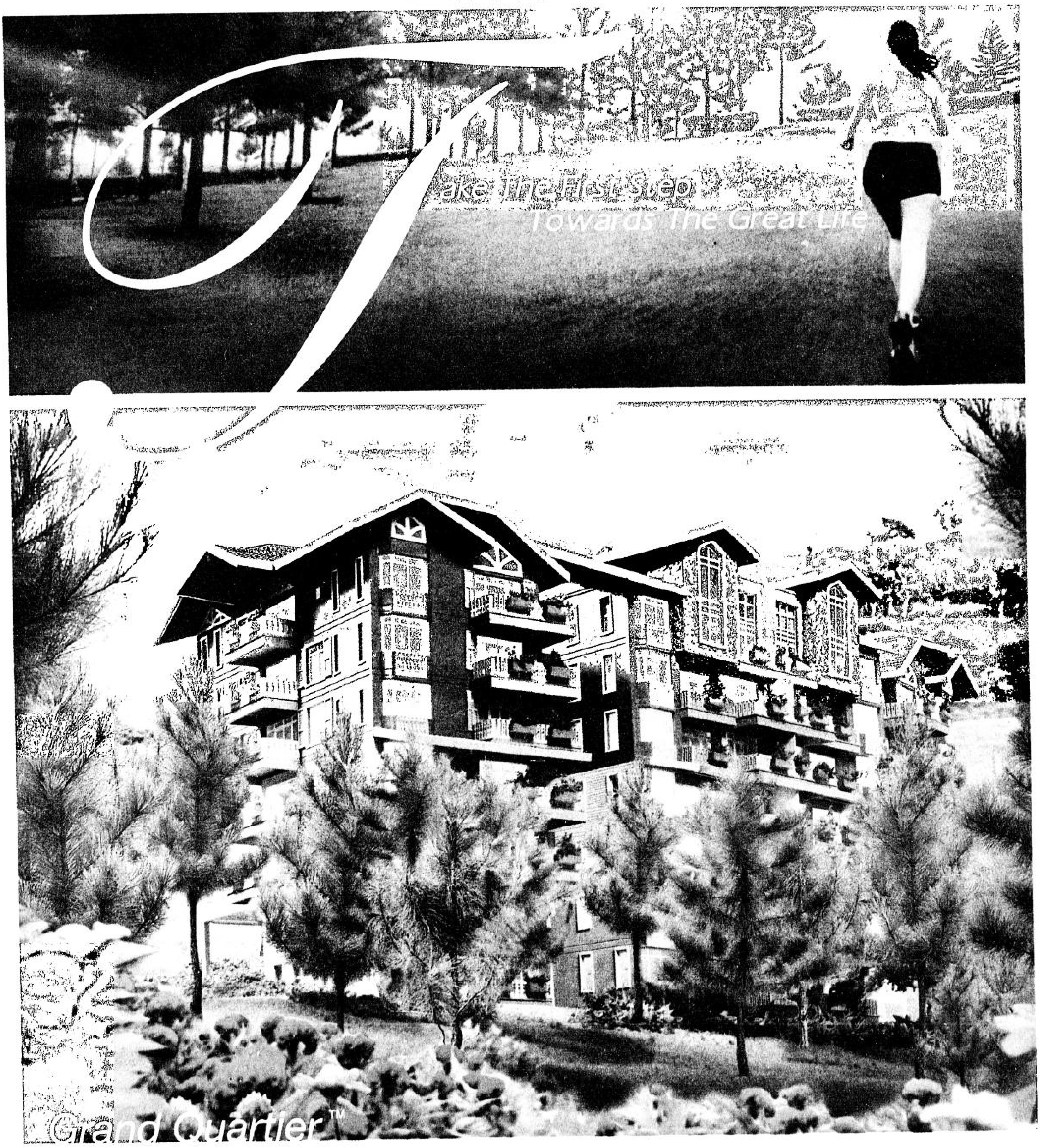
"We are further improving our Philippine operations to address local demand, even as we continue to serve other markets in the region," he said.

The official made the announcement during the launch of a new coffee product called Nescafé Classic First Pick.

Nandkishore added that Nestlé was supporting efforts to encourage local coffee production aimed at raising consumption of coffee products.

Nestlé data show that the company each year buys some $40 million or about P2 billion worth of coffee beans for processing.

NESTLE/ B5



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Asean opens portal to tourism deals

DAVAO CITY—BOOKINGS FOR travel in the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) will soon be done in real time online with the development of a Web portal that will serve as a platform to buy and sell the region's existing tourism products and services.

"As soon as the portal goes live in March this year, bookings will be carried out in real time, at the click of the mouse," says Klaus Lengefeld, sales manager international of Zartmann Touristik Systeme (ZTS), the Germany-based firm that runs information systems that operate online travel bookings.

The German firm signed an agreement to put up and operate the portal with Asean Tourism Association (Aseanta) Monday at the Waterfront Insular Hotel, the site of a series of industry meetings for the ongoing Asean Tourism Forum (ATF) here.

Tunku Iskandar, chair of Aseanta's intra-Asean travel committee, says the setting up of the Asean portal is a first in the region and will have a great impact in the industry.

Instead of searching each hotel website for accommodations, travel agents around the world will only have to log on the Asean portal to compare rates and find the hotels, airline companies or tour operators they're looking for, he said.

The visit Asean portal will be known as visit Asean.travel to feature all of Aseanta member hotels, airlines and tour operators who are directly linked to the site to make it more convenient for travelers around the world to search and book their tours.

"This will be the future mode of travel," says Zartmann. "Instead of looking through catalogs and brochures, you only have to open the portal and arrange travel bookings in just 10 minutes, in just a click of the mouse."

ASEAN members' flags wave at the Davao International Airport as the city hosts Asia's biggest tourism summit.

DENNIS JAY SANTOS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

The portal will go online in March but will be completed in April this year. It will be powered by e-PriNz, a system that provides linkages to several Web travel portals around the world as well as bank settlement process, Zartmann says.

But the system will not only allow travelers to book their tours fast and conveniently but will also allow hotels to put on any rate they wish at any given time and post it on their website, Lengefeld explains.

Iskandar says the industry wants to tap at least 10 percent of Asean's 550 million people as potential tourist market.

The ongoing nine-day Asean Tourism Forum, which currently gathers over 2,000 delegates here, is aimed at encouraging intra-Asean travel and package the region as one tourist destination.

Asean countries include Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

Zartmann says online bookings will increasingly be how travel will be done in the future.

"The trend is towards online shopping, where the client log into a portal, find the hotel website, put the services she needs in her shopping cart, pay with her credit card and then, get her confirmation online.

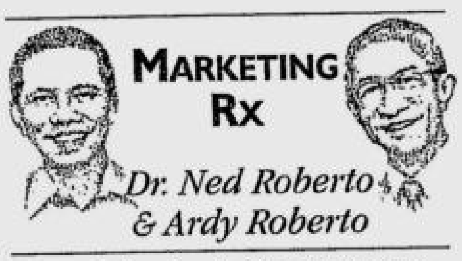
"It's not like an e-mail where you have to wait for another day for a reply," he says.

With the travel portal, it will also be easier for hotels in the region to promote their products worldwide. Unlike before when, Lengefeld says, the only Internet link he can find from Germany about Boracay, were links that connected the Philippines with the Abu Sayyaf.

Iskandar says Asean tourists reached 23 million in 2004, an increase of 20 percent from the previous year, but still less than 5 percent of the region's 550 million people. Total tourist arrivals in the region last year reached 49.9 million, with top non-Asean visitors led by Japan, 3.5 million; China, 3 million; South Korea, 2.3 million; US tourists, 2 million; Australians, 1.8 million; and Taiwanese, 1.7 million.

Among the Asean tourists, the numbers of Singaporeans, Malaysians and Thais were among the highest. *Germelina A. Lacorte and Dennis Jay C. Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Socioeconomic classification and market segmentation



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

Q: WHEN YOU'RE LAUNCHING A new product, and you're conducting a UAI (Usage, Attitude, Image) study to get the profile of consumers, should your respondent base represent all socio-economic classes (SEC) ? Or should the respondent base focus on the specific market you like to read especially if you just want to read your target Class AB and C segments?

A: Let's start from where we agree. We agree with you that when you're planning a new product launch, you should start with market segmentation and from your target market segment. "Should I go after ALL socio-economic classes in my UAI survey?" No, you should go after the respondents who are your target Class AB and C consumers. If you're already at the launching stage, that means you've done your work in reviewing all alternative market segments to target and have zeroed in on a PTM (primary target market) segment. Your research should follow and serve your marketing decisions. In the specific question of the UAI target respondents, those should be your target consumers whom you have defined as Class AB and C consumers.

That's actually relating our answer to the second part of your question. But we'd like now to challenge the target segment assumption in this second part. The segmentation issue that underlies that assumption is this: "In launching a new product, is it usually better to segment your market and target according to socio-economic classes? Or does it make for more strategic sense to segment by user segments and then profile these segments by socio-eco classes?"

The senior MRx-er's book, Strategic Market Segmentation, presented a strong case especially in new product launches in favor of segmenting by product use and then profiling the resulting user segments by (among others) SEC.

Stated in concrete terms and following the case in the second part of your question, here's a restatement of the issue:

"In your new product launch, do you get your marketing and sales teams into a clearer direction of marketing action if you segment your market into, say, the user segment versus the non-user segment, and then find out (that is, profile) how many Class AB, C, D and E are in the user segment and how many in the non-user segment? Or are you and your team more ready and confident to do immediate battle if you segment the market into Class AB, C, D and E, and then find out (that is, profile) how many product users and how many non-users belong to each socio-eco class?"

This is not saying of course that it's wrong to segment by SEC. That's not the issue. The issue is: "Is SEC usually the better means for segmenting your market?" Our research and experience say that it's not.

Let us refer to a specific case to demonstrate this controversial proposition.

This is the case of the launch of the feminine wash, pHCare. The strategic planning for that product launch started with a segmentation research on the feminine wash category. The research found that:

1. feminine wash users cut across all socio eco classes with the dominant users belonging to Class AB and upscale C;

2. the user segment was just around 20 percent of menstruating women, the remaining 80 percent were non-users;

3. among the non-users, most used soap or just water for their feminine hygiene needs;

4. users of soap and water as alternative to feminine wash have no understanding of what feminine wash can do that's distinctively better than soap and water; and

5. among current feminine wash users, most (a little over 80 percent) use Lactacyd and they started their use because of a urinary tract infection and/or on the advice and prescription of their OB-Gyne.

In the discussion of these findings, it became clear that the market opportunity insights were much more with the category user/non-user segmentation than with the SEC segmentation. In particular, here were the more significant of those inferred insights:

1. The larger market opportunity is in penetrating the non-user segment. Successful segment penetration here means literally exploding the feminine wash market.

2. The key to segment penetration of the non-user consumers is in discovering the key driver to feminine wash usage. (This was pursued subsequently and the finding established the basis for the new product positioning. And that key driver? A non-user will use if she can be shown that the feminine wash will do the best job at nurturing and deepening her intimate relationship with her sexual partner.)

3. If the current feminine wash users regard feminine wash (the available ones especially the dominant leader brand, Lactacyd), as an anti-UTI or a medicine, then the correct competitive positioning against Lactacyd is to move away from being a medicine. It's essentially a maneuver to reposition the competitor where it is in fact being used or first used by consumers, and then to own the "daily non-medicine use" for pHCare.

So here's how a user-based segmentation strategically outdid an SEC-based segmentation. It outdid in terms of being able to provide richer market opportunity leads and insights. However, it's a case where the total market had more category non-users than users. So what about the case where the category users are population-wise the vast majority as is true with the more established categories like headache pills, shampoo, instant noodle, fast-food eating, beauty parlor, and the like?

Here, it still pays to start by trying a second level usage segmentation of the user segment. A second level user segmentation partitions the users into, say, a heavy user segment, a regular user segment, an occasional user segment, and a lapsed user segment. Then you can still profile each segment by SEC. Compare this with segmenting by SEC and then profiling each SEC segment by its consumers second level user status positions. In segmenting this way, your overriding concern is still to check if your market opportunity search is still richer with user-based versus SEC-based segmentation.

Consider, for example, instant noodle. Consumers across socio-eco classes take instant noodle. But they take it for different purposes. So market opportunity search for growing one's business in instant noodle lies more with needs segmentation than with SEC segmentation. It is where differences are situated where opportunities for making a difference in your business is to be found. For example, suppose we find a need segment of consumers who take instant noodle mainly for snack or for *"pamatid gutom"* (hunger reliever). Discovering the motivator for these consumers to also take the category as a meal would more than double the instant noodle consumption of this segment. Or take the research finding that there's a need segment of instant noodle who treat it as an *"ulam"* (a viand). That led to the introduction of a *"pancit ulam"* (a viand noodle).

We also must not think that the two segmentation methods are always an alternative to one another. There have been occasions when we've applied usage as a second-level segmentation of a targeted SEC segment. Doing this can raise the latter's power as a market opportunity search instrument or as a business growth source. For example, in real property development, Ayala Land has focused on the Class AB segment to grow its business. In population size, this SEC segment is small. But the real property business is a multi-billion-peso business not because of population size of its target market but because of the individual wealth of the segment's members. In fact, each real property project has a small countable "magnitude of its marketing task." For example, even a 90-unit high-end condominium project makes for a billion peso product.

Within the Class A SEC segment, there were over time, repeat home buyers who bought a house for different purposes and needs. One group bought to give the house as a wedding gift to one of their adult children who was getting married. Another group bought because "all the children are out and own their own, and this house is too big for the two of us now." The purchase motivator was to fit one's housing need to one's family life stage. These were two needs segments within the Class A SEC segment. They were also segments that recur over time among the Class A SEC families. Each family was a market at least twice in its lifetime for these home purchase needs.

In approaching market segmentation and segment targeting then, avoid a fixed template mindset. We realize that such a template has defined your comfort zone and therefore your sense of security. But comfort zones also define the seed of your eventual failure. So in place of a segmentation template, apply a creative market opportunity search and a business growth sourcing examination lens to segmentation. More and more successful marketers are into this. That means we're not just talking here of growing your business. It's also about something very basic: your business survival.

Send questions to MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412. God bless!

Duo tapped foreign shores, now goes for local market

FEW WOULD IMMEDIATELY SELL THEIR products to the international market. Most would test the local waters first.

Not so with Sheldon Villanueva and Kristine Dee, graduates of Industrial Design at the Pratt Institute in New York, who decided to hit the international market right away for their home furnishings.

Sheldon and wife of almost two years, Kristine, set up a home furnishings and accessories design and manufacturing company even before getting engaged, shortly after they obtained NY degrees.

Sheldon is a member of the third generation of a family that has been manufacturing and exporting to stringent buyers from Europe, Asia and the Americas. "My grandparents started it all with their company, Western Pacific Cordage, which supplied those large industrial ropes used in ships, using abaca from Bicol, where we are from," he recounts.

In 1972, his parents bought Wespacor and, because of the trend and demand at that time, produced home accessories like the abaca placemats, coasters, baskets, and hampers, under their company, Shelmed. Being a member of the third generation predictably pointed him toward Industrial Design as a major in college. It was at the De La Salle University where he met Kristine. After college, both apprenticed at their parents' respective firms. Sheldon trained and worked in almost all areas in his parents' Shelmed Cottage Treasures, while Kristine familiarized herself with Deco Board Philippines, a company that supplies home, office and kitchen cabinet systems.

They felt their knowledge was limited at that time so both decided to take up their Master's Degree in New York.

"After our course in Pratt, we felt we wanted to produce our own products—applying the concepts and principles we learned through work and in Pratt Institute," Sheldon shares. "We formed Duo Design, and began with lamps as our first products."

They began by joining trade fairs, something Sheldon learned from his work with Shelmed. Over the past three years, their product line has expanded to include tabletop accessories, furniture, and even rugs. They have been a part of several trade fairs and exhibits, and have exported their products to the US, Europe, Australia and Japan. Although their designs are modern—Sheldon's on the streamlined side, and Kristine's free-flowing and organic—they use the same materials the Villanueva family has been using for decades: abaca, from the roughest to the finest weave.

SHELDON Villanueva and Kristine Dee, partners in life and business.

A HOUSE built in the '70s is used to showcase the couple's creations.

"There are many communities with highly skilled workers in Bicol, which our family has been training and working with for decades. Apart from appreciating the workmanship, Kristine and I would like to continue supporting these communities by providing them with opportunities to grow."

Their businesses abroad have shown how much the modern-Filipiniana products are appreciated globally. Trade shows have revealed, too, that the local market is ready for these designs. "These types and styles of furniture and accessories are better suited for our climate, and with our modern designs, we can see Filipinos take pleasure in going back to 'our very own'," Kristine says.

Because of this, they have opened Duo Living, what they would like to call a 'show home—a shop at home concept'. They had renovated a house built in the '70s and used this to showcase their products in a setting that would make clients appreciate how these could complement today's home.

The two teamed up with interior designer Andrew Peralta Galutera, whom their clients can consult with for their interior and space requirements.

They serve their Filipino clients, on top of producing for international buyers. This takes Sheldon, who is in charge of production and supervision, for Duo Design and Shelmed, to Bicol for one to two weeks at a time. "It's never a chore. We have found the business that allows us to maximize our creativity, and the venue to promote our local craftsmanship. It also feels good to be able to help the communities of extremely talented and hardworking Bicolanos, who would otherwise have limited sources of income," they add. *(Duo Living is located at 840 Balagtas St., Mandaluyong City Tel. 718-0038.)*

Council of State, BSP style

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

HE MAY HAVE SPENT HIS FORMATIVE years in the sleep-inducing economic research department, but Amando Tetangco Jr. apparently has imbibed a few important political lessons along the way worthy of his *kabalen*, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

In his first ever New Year cocktail reception Tuesday as Bangko Sentral governor, not only did Tetangco invite bank chairmen and presidents but also church and opposition leaders led by Sen. Edgardo Angara (wearing his Senate bank and financial institutions committee chair hat), Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, Ateneo president Bienvenido Nebres, and NGO types led by former Revenue Commissioner Rene Bañez.

Even taipan George Ty dropped by, and, to the surprise of industry watchers, Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala not only attended but even lingered on, exchanging pleasantries with, hmmm, Equitable PCIBank chair Ferdinand Martin Romualdez.

Banker S. Cuttle Butt claims that Romualdez wanted to know from the Zobel heir how Ayala Corp., many moons ago, reduced the number of board seats, thus preventing SM-Banco de Oro taipan Henry Sy Sr. from joining the Castilaloy circles.

Seriously speaking now, despite the necessary creative tension between the monetary and fiscal authorities, Finance Secretary Gary Teves seemed to have enjoyed the evening, as well as new Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo and new BIR chief Jose Buñag.

(Just to show you what kind of daily strain a government executive is subjected to, Buñag later on motored to Forbes for the late-night wake of the mother of Petron chair Nicasio Alcantara. But we are digressing.)

True to the song, "Kahit Maputi na ang Buhok Ko," which she hummed before industry executives before her policies stirred up a tempest, Escobillo declined to get drawn into answering media snipings from anonymous industry players.

Going back to the hosts themselves, the Bangko Sentral seemed to have picked up a few sensitivity tips along the way, setting up chairs for the likes of retired central bankers, now SEC Chair Fe Barin, and a number of tents, to protect from the evening mist—the affair was held at the open-air Fort San Antonio Abad—the exposed tops of Deputy Governor Armando Suratos and University of the East president Panfilo O. Domingo.

Flanked by former governors Jose Cuisia Jr. and Jaime Laya, Tetangco even offered a toast to his immediate predecessors, Gabriel Singson and Rafael Buenaventura, who were both in the United States, one on an unstructured holiday, the other on a medical holiday.

After a number of speeches, which hardly anyone listened to, the bankers and the rest of the suits were falling all over themselves trying to invite the guv for a weekend round of golf.

To the lucky few who shall manage to get him to the fairway, here's a tip on how to beat the top central banker in the royal sport: Singson, in his time, loses his swing whenever the currency is under attack; Tetangco could not suppress a tick whenever pressed about the Arrovo bills.

Gelled to the market

A LITTLE-KNOWN cosmetics company in Quezon City, Eve's Cosmetics House, has stumbled into a quiet money-maker with its formulation of the country's first black gel, Neo for Men.

Despite the absence of any advertising, gray-haired men who dislike dyeing their hair have been snapping up the age-defying mask so quickly that the Landmark department store almost always runs out of stock. (Tip: Try SM Makati or Mercury in Glorietta.)

Another maker of a more edible cream, Arce, is building a new plant in Pampanga solely to fill ever-increasing export demand from overseas Pinoys for the distinctly Filipino ice cream.

To comply with tough US food and drug rules, Arce uses powdered coconut milk, instead of its trademark carabao milk, to churn a similar, yet richer-tasting ice cream.

According to the grapevine, export sales now account for more than half of the Arce business.

Money-go-round

- DESPITE being less than a year in Geneva, Ambassador Manuel Antonio Teehankee is being asked to return to Malacañang and assume the presidential legal counsel position vacated by Merceditas Gutierrez who is now the Ombudsman.

Teehankee is naturally protesting, but if he accepts, then former Ambassador to UK and Trade Secretary Cesar Bautista is tipped to succeed him as the Philippines' permanent representative to the World Trade Organization.

- FORMER CAP corporate secretary Pamela Bengzon leads the shortlist of nominees to the Securities and Exchange Commission, vice the newly retired Joselia Poblador.

Heard through the grapevine

RESIGNED Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima and a few foreign partners are setting up a BPO business in the country.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

PNB seen posting profit

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK IS SEEN posting a profit for the fourth straight year.

PNB president Omar Mier said yesterday that he expected the bank to surpass its net profit target last year of P600 million by 15 percent despite more stringent accounting rules.

PNB, once the country's biggest bank, now ranks sixth with total assets of about P219 billion.

From January to September 2005, PNB posted a net income of P454 million, overtaking its P315 million full-year income for 2004.

During the same period, the bank's nonperforming loan ratio went down to 29.2 percent from 39 percent at the end of 2004.

The bank is majority owned by tobacco and beer magnate Lucio Tan.

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Managed Fund - Peso	1.49742	1.49901
Growth Fund - Peso	1.16408	1.16587
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.2187	1.2241

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

Investment Funds of Wealth Builder and Wealth Secure	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
	Jan. 16, 2006	Jan. 9, 2006
Fixed Income Fund	1.113616	1.110858
Balanced Fund	1.104922	1.109162
Equity Fund	1.086321	1.106847

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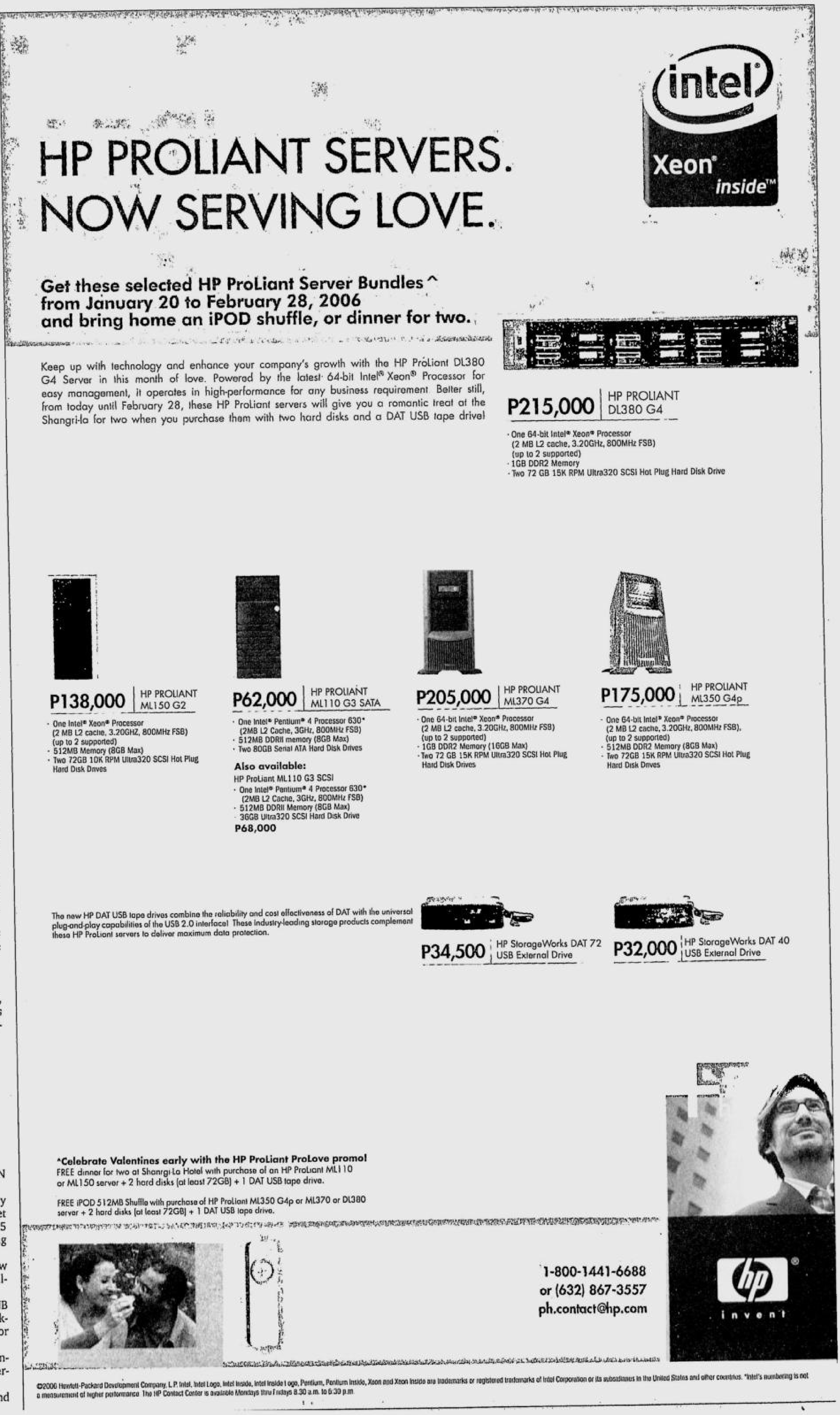

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SMC set to issue $500M in bonds

By Doris C. Dumlao

FOOD AND BEVERAGE GIANT San Miguel Corp. plans to offer as much as $500 million in global bonds over the next few days, taking advantage of the favorable climate for Philippine debt issuers.

Banking sources said SMC had solicited proposals from investment banks on the planned offering, with foreign banks CS First Boston, HSBC and Deutsche Bank expected to bag the underwriting deal.

The blue chip company is expected to use the proceeds from the bond offering to refinance existing debt and bankroll expansion projects, sources said.

"The issuance is slated as soon as possible," one banking source said.

SMC aims to be a major regional player and has started expanding its operations abroad.

One foreign investment banker said it was a very good time for the private sector to test the offshore market.

The strong investor appetite for the Philippine government's $2.1-billion offering last week had likewise perked up demand for sub-investment grade corporate paper.

Investors swamped the Republic of the Philippines' offer of $1.5 billion in US dollar-denominated bonds and 500 million in euro-denominated bonds with $9.5 billion in tenders.

It was the first new international bond deal out of Asia this year.

"The stars are aligned," the banker said. "There's progress on the (domestic) fiscal front and both local and international (positive) factors are aligning."

The banker noted that JG Summit Holdings' recent global offering was raised to $300 million from $200 million after drawing some $1.5 billion in demand.

The seven-year bonds carried an interest of 8.25 percent.

WESM to start operations

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE COUNTRY'S WHOLESALE ELECTRICITY spot market or WESM is now set to start commercial operations.

WESM, which is expected to help reduce the cost of power in the country, will start with a volume of 10,000 megawatts of supply and 5,000 megawatts of demand, according to the Philippine Electricity Market Corp., the company that will operate the WESM.

As there are more sellers than buyers at the start of WESM's operations, the price of electricity that will be bought from the spot market would likely be lower than the current rate.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the electricity market could start commercial operations this month, as soon as the pricing mechanism to be used was approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission.

"Once WESM is in place, we are on our way to empowering consumers by giving them the chance to choose their electricity supplier," said Lotilla.

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

In consonance with Republic Act 9184, the National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting an ocean freight bidding (OFB) on February 08, 2006 at 10:00 AM at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BLDG., FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila among interested Vessel Owners/Operators to transport/ferry max. 400,000 MT (in bags of 50 kg) rice imports of China, Vietnam, Thailand, Pakistan, Australia and/or US origin with an appropriated budget from NFA's corporate resources of FIVE HUNDRED THIRTY MILLION PESOS (Php 530 M). Details, as follows:

	COMMODITY/SPECS	QUANTITY (MT)	ARRIVAL PERIOD
A.	300,000 MT, Non-Iron Fortified Well-Milled, Long Grains White Rice 25% BKNS	AT LEAST 10% AT LEAST 50% BALANCE	FEBRUARY 2006 MARCH 2006 APRIL 2006
B.	50,000 MT, Non-Iron Fortified Well-Milled, Long Grains White Rice 15% BKNS	50,000	WITHIN APRIL 2006
C.	50,000 MT, Iron Fortified Well-Milled, Long Grains White Rice 25% BKNS	50,000	NLT MAY 2006

Philippine shipping companies shall be registered under Philippine Laws and accredited by Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA).

Foreign shipping companies must be represented by a local shipping operator/owner registered under Philippine Laws and accredited by Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA).

Minimum load is 3,000 MT and maximum load of vessel/s to be utilized shall be 15,000 MT. For USA, Australia and/or Pakistan origin, a maximum of 50,000 MT each origin will be awarded.

Minimum offer shall be 15,000 MT.

All interested offerors are required to submit bid offers in US Dollars per gross metric ton. Free in and Out stowed and Trimmed (FIOST), basis, one loading port, one (1) to two (2) safe berths and one discharging port, one (1) to two (2) safe berths, as specified in the NFA Ocean Freight Bid Terms.

Likewise, all interested offerors are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 2.5% of the highest value of the offered freight in the form of Cashier's and/or Manager's Check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a reputable commercial bank.

Winning Bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 5% of the value of the awarded freight offer within three (3) banking days after receipt of the Notice of Award in the form of Cashier's and/or Manager's Check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila.

List of Eligibility Requirements and Instruction to Bidders may be secured thru MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Manager, Department for Marketing Operations, 5th Flr., NFA Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City, Telephone Nos. 712-1564, 743-86-96 or 712-3341 Loc. 8513 starting January 13, 2006.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) detailing the conditions of the bid and Offer Sheets will likewise be available starting January 13 up to January 31, 2006 (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM) upon payment of a Php 7,500.00 non-refundable fee.

The Ocean Freight Pre-Bidding conference will be held on **January 25, 2006, at 2:00 PM** at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Submission of eligibility requirements, technical proposal and price offers will be between 8:00 AM to 9:55 AM at the FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila on **February 08, 2006. Opening of bids will start at exactly 10:00 AM.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) JESSUP P. NAVARRO
Deputy Administrator
and Chairman, BAC

(PDI - January 13 & 20, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Commission on Audit through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Constructors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : Construction of Three (3) Storey COA Dormitory
Location : COA Compound, Commonwealth Ave., Q.C.
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC): P 69,596,790.46
Contract Duration 210 Calendar Days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License Category Large "B" applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with the value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

Schedule		BAC Activities
January 31, 2006	–	Receipt of Letters of Intent and Issuance of Eligibility Forms
February 3, 2006	–	Eligibility Screening @ 10:00 A.M.
February 6, 2006	–	Issuance of Bid Documents
February 16, 2006	–	Pre-Bid Conference @ 2:00 P.M.
February 28, 2006	–	Receipt and Opening of Bids @ 10:00 A.M.

Prospective Bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC Office, Room 102, Ground Floor, Former SAADO Bldg., COA Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to Bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Twenty Thousand Pesos (P20,000) to the Commission on Audit Treasury.

The Commission on Audit assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) AsCom. ARCADIO B. CUENCO, JR.
Chairman
Bids and Awards and Committee

(PDI – January 20, 2006)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO BID

Being offered through public bidding, as one whole lot and on an "as-is, "where-is" basis, are the buildings, machinery and equipment formerly belonging to Unisol Industries and Manufacturing Corporation (UNISOL), located at Barrio Makiling, Calamba, Laguna, for a total Floor Price of P10,431,670.00.

Interested parties may request for the duly authenticated copies of the bidding documents for a nominal fee of PhP500.00 from the Marketing Department, 5th Floor, PMO Building, 104 Gamboa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. The deadline for interested parties to avail of the bid documents shall be on 31 January 2006, 5:00 p.m.

All offers shall be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of other bidders on 7 February 2006, at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, 104 Gamboa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City.

For more information, please call Mr. John DF. Baldemor of the PMO Marketing Department at 817-6331 / 817-8762.

(PDI–January 20, 21 & 22, 2006)

QUINTANA MANAGEMENT LLC and SEAWORLD MARINE SERVICES, INC.

A Strong Partnership in Creating Jobs for Filipino Seafarers

At a time when the economic woes of the Philippines seem to be far from over and jobs are scarce, the entry of Quintana Management LLC in the Philippine ship manning market through its local manning agent, Seaworld Marine Services, Inc. is a boon to the labor economy.

QUINTANA was founded in January 2005, by affiliates of Corbin J. Robertson, Jr. First Reserve Corporation and American Metals and Coal International, registered in the Marshall Islands and operated from Athens, Greece. QUINTANA provides dry bulk marine transportation services world-wide. To date, it owns and operates a fleet of 2 CAPESIZE and 8 PANAMAX SIZE bulk carriers, putting Quintana **amongst the largest dry-bulk fleets in the industry** with a total carrying capacity of 916,072 dwt, since it commenced operations in April 2005.

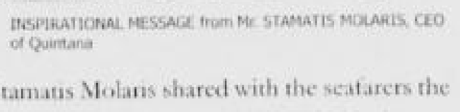
SEAWORLD was founded by Capt. Rommel T. Gacutan in April 2005. It acquired its manning license in June 2005. The mission of SEAWORLD is to help in the generation of employment opportunities for Filipino seafarers, thereby uplifting the quality of their life and their families and contributing to the economic growth of the Filipino nation. To date, it has already deployed over 200 seafarers on board 10 ships in a short span of 6 months on a full crew basis. With the plan of its principal, QUINTANA to double its fleet in 2006, **SEAWORLD can offer more job opportunities to the Filipino seafarers at the most competitive compensation package in the bulk industry.**

QUINTANA & SEAWORLD OFFICERS WITH GUESTS, PMMA President Rear Admiral Fidel Dinoso & Mrs. CAROLINA DE LEON of POEA.

QUINTANA and SEAWORLD formally launched their partnership last December 9, 2005 through a Seafarers' Conference held at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel. No less than the CEO of Quintana,

A TOAST FOR LONG TERM PARTNERSHIP. (from left) Capt. Rommel Gautan, Mr. George Tartarakis, Mr. Alex Tsitsonis, Mr. Stamatis Molaris, Mr. Nikos Frantzeskasis & Capt. Michael Koutsouridis.

Mr. Stamatis Molaris flew to Manila to lead the momentous event. He was accompanied by other officers of Quintana namely Mr. Nikos Franzeskakis, Chief Commercial Operations Officers; Capt. Michael Koutsouridis, Operations Manager; Mr. George Tartarakis, Quality Manager; and Mr. Alex Tsitsonis, Crewing Officer. The theme of the conference was Building Mutually Beneficial Partnerships. Rear Admiral Fidel Dinoso, President of PMMA graced the event and delivered a speech on "The Role of the PMMA in Developing Quality Merchant Marine Officers". Mrs. Carolina de Leon, Chief of the Seabased Employment Accreditation and Processing Center of POEA also attended and talked about the "Role of POEA in the Ship Manning Industry and Trends in the Philippine Ship Manning Industry".



INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE from Mr. STAMATIS MOLARIS, CEO of Quintana

CEO Stamatis Molaris shared with the seafarers the vision of Quintana. QUINTANA aims to be a dominant global player in the industrial segment of the dry bulk market. It also intends to attract the "the best seafarers" in the bulk sector by offering not only competitive salary and benefit package, but also a bankable career.

Capt. Rommel Gacutan, President and COO of SEAWORLD presented the mission and vision of his company, as well as the specific programs to address the needs of his principal and seafarers, such as assured rotation plan, performance feedback facilitation as a basis for competency and career development, efficient document management and on time pay out of allotments.

The coming out of QUINTANA and SEAWORLD in the manning industry culminated in their first corporate Christmas Party on December 10 at the Palm Seafood Restaurant at The Fort. The affair was made more memorable by the awarding of the ISO9001:2000 Certificate to SEAWORLD by Mr. Renato Navarete, Managing Director of Certification International Philippines (CIP). QUINTANA and SEAWORLD officers and staff, the seafarers and officers' wives laughed their hearts out with Joy Viado and danced the night away with a live band. It was certainly a beautiful night to remember.

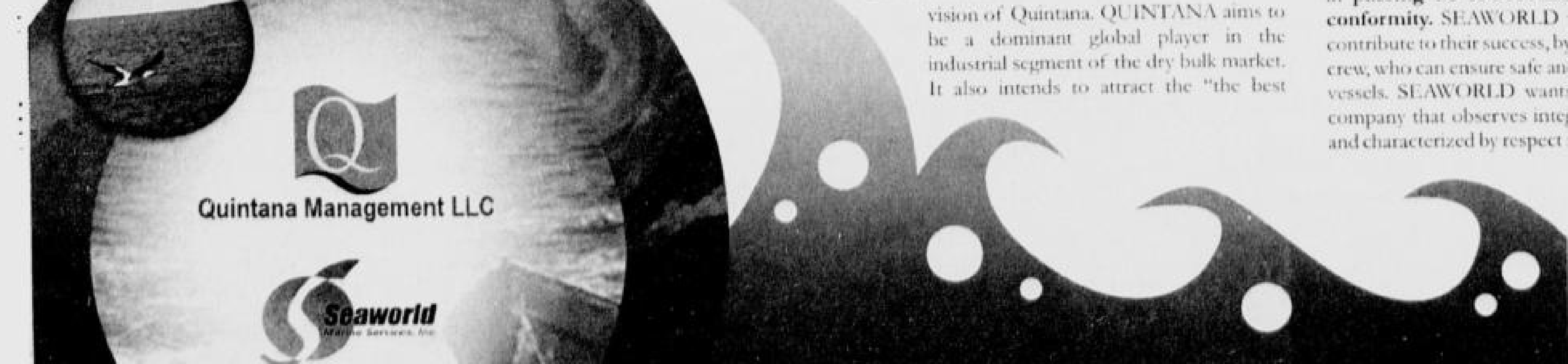
Quintana & Seaworld: Quality-Driven Companies

AWARDING OF ISO 9001:2000 to SEAWORLD President, Capt. Rommel T. Gacutan by MR. RENATO NAVARETE, Managing Director of Certification International Philippines (CIP). (From left) Mr. George Tartaraks, CIP Managing Director Mr. Renato Navarete, Mr. Alex Tsitsonis, Capt. Rommel Gacutan, Mr. Nikos Frantzeskasis, Mr. Stamatis Molaris and Capt. Michael Koutsourids.

QUINTANA became a publicly listed company on July 14, 2005 at the New York Stock Exchange. The Company's competitive strength lies in its high quality and young fleet, its focus on larger dry bulk vessels, increased flexibility through the use of sister ships, low cost operations through internal management of its vessels, stable cash flow from reputable charterers and experienced management team. Its high regard for excellence is manifested in its ship maintenance programs, safety and environmental policies and training of qualified seafarers.

SEAWORLD is a new company, but its drive to excellence is manifested in **passing its ISO9001:2000 certification audit, with zero non-conformity.** SEAWORLD vows to deliver value to its principals and contribute to their success, by providing only competent ship officers and crew, who can ensure safe and efficient navigation and operation of their vessels. SEAWORLD wants to distinguish itself in the industry as a company that observes integrity in all its dealings, driven by excellence and characterized by respect for the dignity of the Filipino seafarers.

QUINTANA and SEAWORLD are committed in leading their respective organizations towards business leadership propelled by competent and committed Filipino seafarers.



PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 19, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	12,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	36	36	36	36	3,375,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57	57	56	56	401,600
China Banking Corp.	605	605	605	605	850
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	62.5	62.5	62	62	27,200
International Exch. Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	10,200
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31.5	32	30.5	31	753,000
Philippine National Bank	31.5	32	31.5	32	18,000
Phil. Savings Bank	35	35	35	35	13,000
Security Bank Corp.	37	37.5	37	37	739,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	31.5	31.5	31	31.5	18,900
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Manulife Financial Corp.	3065	3080	3065	3080	740
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	152,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2140	2140	2135	2135	420
Ivantage Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	510,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	51.5	52.5	51.5	52	534,200
Manila Electric Co. A	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	26,100
Manila Electric Co. B	21	21.25	21	21	430,200
Manila Water Co., Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	4,796,000
Petron Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.7	4.75	5,401,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	70,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	23	23	9,900
Jollibee Foods Corp.	39	39	38	38.5	204,900
Pancake House Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.6	3.6	67,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.46	1.5	1.46	1.48	232,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63.5	64	63	63.5	53,500
San Miguel Corp. B	87	87.5	86.5	87.5	26,200
Tanduay Holdings, Inc.	3.25	3.6	3.25	3.6	44,000
Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	19	18.75	19	38,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.36	0.37	0.35	0.36	2,710,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1	1.04	1	1.02	1,550,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.45	4.45	4.25	4.35	8,941,000
CHEMICALS					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.45	3.45	30,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	50,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	30,000
Pryce Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	1,000,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	500,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	16,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	112,000,000
Ayala Corp.	325	327.5	325	325	31,380
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	450,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.85	4.75	4.85	530,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	20,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.22	2.22	279,000
APC Group Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.24	0.24	760,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.9	0.91	0.88	0.89	1,990,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	9	9	9	8,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	1,591,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.1	472,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.15	0.155	380,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	200,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	46,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.15	4.15	7,109,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.245	12,300,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	10,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	100,000
SM Investments Corp.	239	239	238	239	138,020
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	6,894,400
Belle Corp.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.08	332,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.185	0.18	0.185	1,900,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.34	1.36	1.34	1.34	2,058,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.88	1.9	1.88	1.88	223,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.225	0.225	0.22	0.22	2,360,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.25	0.3	0.25	0.28	3,060,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.49	0.5	4,970,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	100,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	300,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.46	1.46	1,345,000
Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.245	0.21	0.235	6,220,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.49	0.5	0.49	0.5	900,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.38	1.38	2,791,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	1,870,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	300,000
Polar Property Holdings	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	5,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	6	6	5.9	6	45,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.13	0.155	0.13	0.155	6,880,000
SM Development Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	46,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.8	5,681,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	7,540,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	1,200
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.93	0.94	0.92	0.94	1,630,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	725	735	725	725	3,230
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.4	3.45	3.4	3.45	460,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1800	1805	1780	1800	27,980
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,900,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	6,700,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	45,000
Philweb Corp.	0.021	0.023	0.021	0.023	1,408,500,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.88	1.9	1.88	1.9	50,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.5	141,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	250,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	2,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.6	1.66	1.6	1.64	2,335,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	620,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	120,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	9	9	9	9	3,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Paxys Inc.	6.9	7.4	6.9	7.3	5,047,000
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	42	44	42	44	2,100
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.18	1.2	1.14	1.18	1,662,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.7	1.7	1.64	1.7	3,104,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	93,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.8	6.1	5.8	6.1	1,367,000
Benguet Corp. A	7	7	7	7	10,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.64	1.64	1.56	1.56	14,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.235	0.235	0.225	0.225	8,470,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	5,840,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	11,300,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	67,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	800,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.16	2.16	2.12	2.14	7,650,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	317,700
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.26	1,550,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated, Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	790,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	87,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	6,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	50,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.9	4	3.9	4	140,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	12	12	12	12	300
SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES					
Cashrounds Inc.	4	4	4	4	400,000

CURRENCIES

January 19, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.825968	1.000000	52.7720
Japan	Yen	0.007169	0.008679	0.4580
United Kingdom	Pound	1.456513	1.763400	93.0581
Hongkong	Dollar	0.106533	0.128979	6.8065
Switzerland	Franc	0.644986	0.780884	41.2088
Canada	Dollar	0.705233	0.853825	45.0581
Singapore	Dollar	0.506916	0.613723	32.3874
Australia	Dollar	0.618471	0.748783	39.5148
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.190956	2.652590	139.9825
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220246	0.266652	14.0718
Brunei	Dollar	0.505365	0.611845	32.2883
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000087	0.000105	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.020953	0.025368	1.3387
UAE	Dirham	0.224881	0.272264	14.3679
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.210700	63.8911
Argentina	Peso	0.271254	0.328407	17.3307
Brazil	Real	0.356097	0.431127	22.7514
Denmark	Kroner	0.134049	0.162293	8.5645
India	Rupee	0.018649	0.022578	1.1915
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.219936	0.266276	14.0519
Mexico	New Peso	0.078232	0.094715	4.9983
New Zealand	Dollar	0.567364	0.686908	36.2495
South Africa	Rand	0.136321	0.165044	8.7097
Korea	Won	0.000833	0.001008	0.0532
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025750	0.031175	1.6452

Nestlé . . .

From page B1

Domestic sales form the bulk of Nestlé's local coffee business, which has been growing between 4 percent and 5 percent yearly.

NPI is pushing local farmers to grow coffee in a sustainable way by providing them information on organic farming techniques, as well as access to coffee seedlings from the Nestle Development Farm in Tagum, Davao del Norte, Nandkishore said.

He added coffee cultivation should be encouraged, considering the local climate was ideal for this.

The country has the potential to overtake Vietnam's lead in coffee development in the region, and even become one of the major exporters in the world, he said.

Nestlé product lines include milk, infant nutrition, infant food, beverages, non-dairy creamer, food, ice cream and chilled dairy, breakfast cereals, confectionery and pet care.

The firm also owns established brands such as Nescafe, Nido, Milo, Nestea, Maggi, Bear Brand, Nestlé and Alpo.

Share . . .

From page B1

and 2,125.45. Volume was 1.97 billion shares worth P751.5 million ($14.22 million).

The broader all-shares index fell 2.91 points to 996.85. Losers beat gainers 47 to 27, with 57 stocks unchanged. The peso was at 52.831 to the dollar as of mid-day.

Equitable PCI Bank led the decline, ending down P2.50 at P62. Top-traded Banco de Oro ended steady at P36. Philippine Long Distance Telephone fell P5 to P1,800 while Globe Telecom retreated P5 to P725.

San Miguel A shares were down 50 centavos at P63.50, while San Miguel B shares ended unchanged at P87.50. *AFP*

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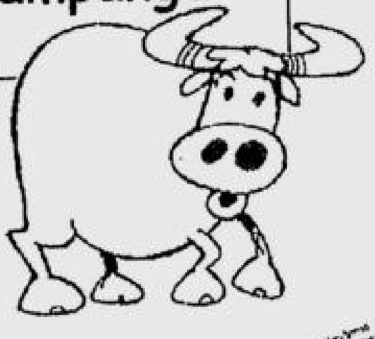

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(PDI-Jan. 13, 20 & 27, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that MARAPRI LANDE DEV'T CORP. Stock Certificate Nos. 001 & 004 representing 6,666 shares issued in the name of MARIA LINA S. VELAYO were lost as per Affidavit of Loss dated 01-16-2006 of Notary Public Atty. Lope M. Velasco of Makati City as per Doc. No.26, Page No.07, Book No.62, Series of 2006. If no contest received new certificate will be issued.
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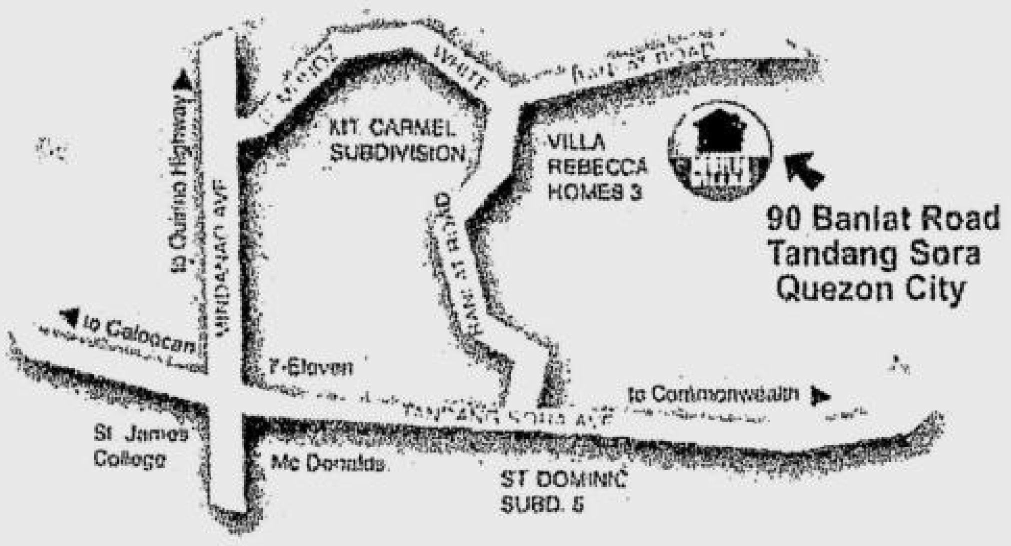

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2.	B4 L56 Rosal St., Village Park Subd., Langkaan, Dasmariñas	RH	20	38	176,880.00	
3.	B69 L3 St. Joseph St., Cityhomes Resortville Ph. 2, Langkaan, Dasmariñas	SA	36	76	388,300.00	With illegal occupant
4.	B70 L15 Dasmariñas Ave., Cityhomes Resortville Ph. 2, Langkaan, Dasmariñas	SA	36	76	315,700.00	Bare/dilapidated
5.	B18 L11 Sunflower St., Remedios Ville Subd., Salitran 2, Dasmariñas	SA	25	72	349,580.00	With illegal occupant
6.	B77 Lots 19&21 Manila Drive, Cityhomes Burol, Burol, Dasmariñas	SA	36	76	301,840.00	
7.	B23 L77 Zinc St., Goldenville Subd., Brgy. Sabang, Dasmariñas	RH	21	35	173,800.00	
8.	B22 L5 Titanium St., Goldenville Subd., Brgy. Sabang, Dasmariñas	RH	24	40	217,800.00	
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2.	Unit 41-E Int. Nicanor Reyes St., Varsity Hills Brgy. Loyola, Quezon City	TH	187	114	3,702,600.00	With illegal occupant
3.	B9-B L12 Alley 8, Kingstown Village, Brgy. Bagumbong, Caloocan City	SA	36	70	349,800.00	
4.	# 2 Getty St., cor. Atlas St., Filinvest Homes II, Brgy. Batasan Hills, Quezon City	2 storey	246	630	5,478,000.00	With illegal occupant
5.	B47 L22 Alley 35, Villa Luisa, Brgy. Bagumbong, Caloocan City	2 storey	38	35	266,200.00	With illegal occupant
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Honesto "Tichong" De Lara De Jesus

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 16, 2006 at the age of 88.

His loving wife **Lilia Jara**; children: **Jose Carlos "Jacy"**, **Noemi Corazon "Baby" & Frumencio Nicolas "Nick" Lagustan** and **Soledad Emilia "Joji" & Ramoncito "Chito" Cruz**; grandchildren: **Jericho, Jason, Jerome, Angelo** and **Dominic**; brothers and sister; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains which lie in state at his residence in Daet, Camarines Norte will be brought to Santuario de San Antonio Parish multipurpose chapel, Capilla San Francisco, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City on Friday, January 20, 2006 at **5:00 PM**.

Interment shall be on Sunday, January 22, 2006 at the Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City at **10:00 AM** after the funeral Mass.

In Loving Memory

on the 16th Death Anniversary

MERCEDES R. CUADRANTE

who died in the Grace of our Lord
on January 20, 1990

Masses will be offered at the following churches:

Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills, San Juan, MM.	7:15 AM 6:15 AM
Mary The Queen, Greenhills, San Juan, MM.	6:00 AM 7:00 AM 6:00 PM

Her family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to say a prayer in her memory for the eternal repose of her soul.

"For God
so loved the
world, that
He gave
His only
begotten
Son, that
whoever
believes in
Him shall
not perish
but have
everlasting
life."
John 3:16

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Message of Thanks

His wife **Virginia**, children: **Gov. Robert Lyndon**, **Rep. Robert Ace**, **PTA Gen. Mgr. Robert Dean** and **Mary Grace**; daughters-in-law **Tricia, Badette** and **Nana**; son-in-law **Lauro Baja III**; parents **Ret. Judge Felix** and **former Vice Gov. Regina**; brothers and sisters, grandchildren, relatives and friends of the late

Senator Robert Zabala Barbers

wish to convey their heartfelt gratitude
to all those who paid their last respects,
offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers,
messages of sympathy and Novena Masses,
*donated to his favorite charity - **RZB Foundation Inc.***
and who in various ways gave comfort to the family.

Our Dearly Beloved MAMA

CORAZON HERNANDEZ DELOS SANTOS

of Ligao City

Peacefully joined her Creator and her Beloved Husband,
***BRAULIO BAGAPORO DELOS SANTOS** of Iriga City on January 18, 2006*
at the age of 84.

Her children, **ERNIE & FRANKIE MAC (+), JOHNNY & CONNIE RILLO, RAUL & EVELYN SIBULO, THETET & EVELYN BACLAO**; grandchildren, **NATHALIE & GLENN KIRKNESS, ANTHONY, ERNEST, JEN & KIRBY TORRES, JOHN PAUL, JOHN JEREMY, JANE, JILL & RAHUL, JEAN, JOYCE, JOBIE & IRENE, CHRISTABEL & VON**, great grandchildren, **MATT-MATT, YSABEL, YVONNE** and **RIANA**; relatives and friends request to offer prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the NUESTRA SRA. DE SALVACION Funeral Chapel, Ligao City.

The Concelebrated Mass of the Resurrection will be offered at 2:00 P.M., Monday, 23 January 2006 at the St. Stephen Parish Church, Ligao City.

Interment follows immediately at the LIGAO CATHOLIC CEMETERY, City of LIGAO.

Third Death Anniversary

Justice Porfirio V. Sison

(COURT OF APPEALS)

September 6, 1918 – January 20, 2003

Former Board Member, Vice Governor, Acting Governor Province of Pangasinan
Founding Chairman, Phil. Retired Justices of the Court of Appeals Association
Founding Chairman, Philippine Council of Law Deans (PCLD)
Founder Former Dean, College of Law University of Pangasinan
Former Dean, Manila Law College
Past President, Philippine Constitutional Association (PHILCONSA)
First Filipino President, United Way International

On the occasion of his **Third Death Anniversary**, his wife **Governor Nancy Q. Sison**; their children **Judge Anthony** and **Josephine**, **Mita** and **Dr. Salvador T. Duque**, **Mory**, **Roberto** and **Ma. Leonor**, **Nancy** and **Justice Vicente Q. Roxas**, **Marirose** and **Raul L. Garcia**, **Dr. Evita** and **Dr. Pablo L. Torre**, and their families request relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Masses will be celebrated for him at the following churches today, January 20, 2006:

Epiphany of Our Lord Cathedral, Lingayen, Pangasinan	6:00 AM & 5:00 PM
Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Manaoag, Pangasinan	6:00 AM
Parish of St. John the Evangelist, Dagupan City	6:00 AM
St. Peter and Paul Church, Calasiao, Pangasinan	6:00 AM
Mary Help of Christians, Mangaldan, Pangasinan	6:00 AM
St. Isidro the Farmer Parish, Labrador, Pangasinan	6:00 AM
St. Andrew the Apostle, Bugaldon, Pangasinan	6:00 AM
St. Joseph the Patriarch, Aguilar, Pangasinan	6:00 AM
La Strada, La Vista, Quezon City	6:00 PM
Christ The King, Greenmeadows	7:00 AM
Mary The Queen, Greenhills	7:00 AM
Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills	6:15 AM
Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park	6:15 AM & 12:15 PM
Santa Rosa De Lima Parish, Pasig	6:00 AM & 6:00 PM
Tektite Chapel, Philippine Stock Exchange Center	12:15 PM & 5:30 PM
Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Cubao, Quezon City	6:00 AM, 7:00 AM & 6:00 PM
Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, New York City	6:00 AM & 6:00 PM

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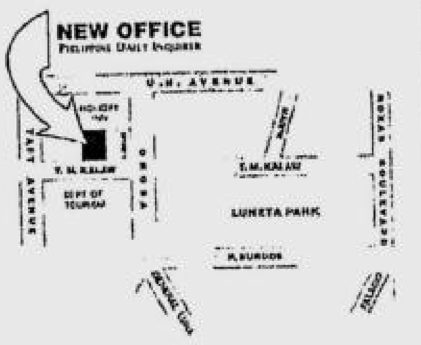

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There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heaven.
Ecclesiastes 3.1

CAPT. NARCISO MAYOL-LISTON

(PN,GSC, MNSA) [Ret.]

(Oct. 29, 1936 – Jan. 15, 2006)

of San Francisco, Cebu, by the grace & mercy of God joined Him on January 15, 2006.

His wife, **Eloisa (Liza)**; children: **Gang, Nanette, Boy Jun & Irene** and **Louie & Nonie**; grandchildren: **Kurt, Maika, Biboy, Spreekee, Kyle, Nicole, Nathaniel, Luigi & Nayana**, and great granddaughter **Rachel**, invite "Papas" relatives and friends to join them lay "Papa" to his final rest on Saturday, January 21, 2006, after the 8 am Mass at Libingan ng mga Bayani, Bayani Road, Ft. Bonifacio, Taguig City.

His remains lie in state at the mortuary of Libingan ng mga Bayani, Bayani Road, Ft. Bonifacio, Taguig City

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ERRATUM

In connection with the Invitation to Bid for IT Equipment and Software published last Sunday, January 15, 2006, **Lot 4 should read as "DB2 UDB V8.2".**

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator
& BAC Chairperson

(PDI – January 20, 2006)

ATTENTION:

GRADUATING STUDENTS

UPGrade 2006, The 17th University of the Philippines Job Fair will be on January 23-27, 2006 at the Ang Bahay ng Alumni, UP Campus, Diliman.

23-27 JANUARY 2006
Ang Bahay ng Alumni, UP Campus
Diliman, Quezon City
8:00am - 5:00pm

UPGRADE The 17th University Job Fair

The organizers will gladly welcome any inquiries regarding this event through the following: Tel. No./Fax No.: 926.4162. You may also contact us through any of the following: 0920.4060587 (Roynoline Tugade), 0916.2034170 (Kristy Abello), 0917.8584532 (Crystle Lorraine Tan).

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Palace cuts tariffs on petrochem to 5%

Move seen to soften impact of VAT hike on downstream players

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MALACAÑANG ISSUED LAST WEEK AN executive order that lowered the tariffs on petrochemical imports from Southeast Asian countries to 5 percent.

EO No. 486, dated Jan. 12, reduced the duties on 41 tariff lines, including raw materials for plastic products and finished goods, from the present range of 7 percent to 10 percent.

The products covered included polymers of ethylene, propylene or of other olefins, styrene and vinyl chloride or of other halogenated olefins.

Coverings of plastics for floors, walls and ceilings; plates, sheets, film, foil and strips of plastics, and plastic twine, cordage, ropes and cables are also covered.

The order superseded EO 161 which suspended the imposition of a 5-percent duty on these products, which should have been done starting 2003 under the common effective preferential tariff regime of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations free trade agreement.

EO 486, however, provides that tariffs would revert to the EO 161 levels once a local naphtha cracker plant starts commercial operation as determined by the Cabinet-level Committee on Tariffs and Related Matters.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said the government "recognizes the need to provide an enabling environment" for the naphtha cracker to attain international competitiveness.

The lowering of tariffs had been the subject of a squabble between downstream players who said high duties caused price distortions and midstream players who supported the naphtha cracker project.

Philippine Plastics Industry Association welcomed EO 486, saying it would soften the impact of the 2-percentage-point increase to 12 percent of the value added tax starting February and the increase to 35 percent of the corporate income tax.

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Insurance Commission raising fees

THE INSURANCE COMMISSION IS SET to increase by more than 100 percent the fees and charges it slaps on insurance companies, saying the move is necessary to complement efforts to enhance the delivery of its services.

Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo said the increase would be implemented in February or March. The specific amounts are still under study by the National Tax Research Center.

"The increase will be huge because the rates have been the same for about three decades now," Escobillo told reporters in an interview.

Escobillo said the Insurance Commission intended to align its rates with those imposed by counterpart regulatory bodies, such as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Escobillo said the increase in fees and charges was needed to cover for its operating expenses, which were presently shouldered by the national government.

Currently, fees on the renewal of an insurance company's registration from only P100 to P1,200. Examination fees for insurance agents are set at only between P150 and P180.

Escobillo said the Insurance Commission intends to improve its computer systems to better monitor the financial condition of insurance firms. Computerization efforts would also aid in the Insurance Commission's plan to move toward a risk-based approach in supervising insurance firms. *Michelle V. Remo*

NTC asked to step into PT&T-Smart row

PHILIPPINE TELEGRAPH & TELEPHONE Corp. of the Santiago family is contesting the computation of the interconnection fees charged on it by Smart Communications Inc. since 1996.

PT&T accused Smart of overcharging and was seeking a refund. It had asked the National Telecommunications Commission to intercede on its behalf.

Smart, however, said it had been billing PT&T based on their compromise agreement signed earlier.

PT&T originally owed Smart P72.38 million in access charges, or fees on PT&T calls to Smart, from October 1996 to December 1998. However, PT&T claimed it owed Smart only P48.54 million for the period.

"In 1999, due to the financial condition of PT&T, Smart accepted PT&T's plea to use its record on the condition that PT&T would settle the amount until May 2001 based on its committed payment schedule," said Smart in its letter to PT&T.

PT&T was supposed to pay Smart P1 million a month from September 1999 to June 2000; P2 million a month from July to September 2000; P2.5 million a month from October to December 2000, and P3 million a month from January to May 2001 for a total of P38.5 million. But PT&T was able to pay only P13.8 million from October 1999 to March 2001.

"With this, Smart would have reverted to its initial figure as per the agreement, yet it gave PT&T another chance to settle its outstanding account through an offsetting arrangement involving Smart/Piltel and PT&T/Capwire, which reduced its outstanding account to P11.11 million," said Smart. *Clarissa S. Batino*

JGSH debt offer raised to $300M

JGSH PHILIPPINES LTD., AN OFFSHORE subsidiary of taipan John Gokongwei Jr., is increasing its seven-year debt offer to $300 million due to strong investor interest, parent firm JG Summit Holdings Inc. told the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) yesterday.

JG Summit has agreed to act as the guarantor for the fixed rate notes due 2013.

The notes will have an interest rate of 8 percent and will carry a put option on the fifth year, allowing bondholders to sell back the bonds to JGSH at par at the end of five years.

JGSH Philippines originally planned to $200 million of the debt paper.

Credit Suisse First Boston (Europe) Limited was engaged as the lead manager for the offering. Proceeds from the notes issue will be used to repay $100 million in debts of the JG Summit Group due next month. A portion of the proceeds will be spent for "general corporate purposes." *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

LIFESTYLE

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Inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Kapal ng orig, tibay ng orig!
Islander

Lifestyle crowd gets busy this year

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

MORE FRIENDS AND colleagues define the state of their career and life while charting their direction in the new year:

Ed Quimson, the chef who's designing the cuisine of restaurants, from Club Noah in Palawan, where he prepares incredible gastronomic feasts for weekend and holiday guests, to the reinvented Teak Bistro in Rockwell (the place to go for your pizza these days; its Gorgonzola is smashing): "I plan to do community work for **Nene Lichauco** and the Bel-Air Heritage Cookbook, do consulting for Splendido in Tagaytay or with **Heny Sison**, do a few feasts for Filo at the Fort, do volunteer work for Magsaysay Lines, and finally do groundwork for my cookbook."

Leica Carpo: "Do more yoga, golf, French. I need to be patient more and expand career options, shop and eat less, travel, read, go to Church and work out more, come up with an amazing fruit cake recipe, enjoy single life, and love everyone a little more."

Wynn Wynn Ong: "This is the best place of my life so far—my second skin. I'm comfortable with who I am and excited about who I will evolve into. My design philosophy reflects my belief that change and our ability to learn are constant."

Therese Coronel Santos: "I start by being conscious of my health, eating right and prioritize daily exercise, giving more time for my personal and spiritual well-being."

Raymund Isaac: "Simplify life, work and loves. I love to reset my life, look [at it] through a child's eye. Love like the first time and dream thinking all will come true."

Alya Honasan: "It's the year of taking things to a different level, pushing my yoga education further at Iyengar school in India, going to serious cooking classes, seeing my first *pamangkin* get married and start a new generation—*lolahood* looms. I'm at the point where I've done much of what I hoped to and could do. Now we'll see if I can take on what I thought I couldn't while keeping all I love close to me."

Louie Cruz: "At 56, one gets closer to the finish line. I'm enjoying life every day to the max physically, but I'm also developing my spiritual growth. My major task is to get rid of toxic waste—how to avoid people with venom."

Alex Vergara: "I don't usually make plans just because some people have unwitting ways of killing them… I will try my best to rein in my cynicism. It has been a long hard climb to where I am —not that I'm at the top of my game. Gaining some credibility as fashion/lifestyle writer doesn't happen overnight. The real fun starts this year, now that I've gained attention. Are they ready for me? I've been meaning to learn a third language. Since "Elvish" is not offered, am willing to settle for Spanish. A career as a hot *telenovela* star is a welcome change.

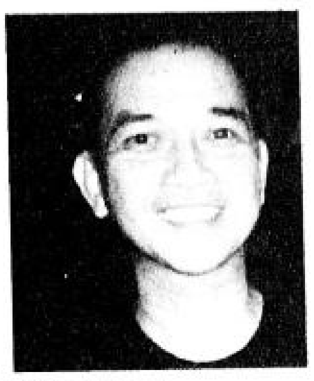
Aurora Silayan Go, on her teen sex-education advocacy: "I'll work on the social franchising of teen health quarters to be adopted

LIFESTYLE/ C3

MIKE de la Rosa

WYNN WYNN Ong

THERESE Coronel Santos



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EDD FUENTES (center) with the Nivea rah! rah! marketing team: Alice Cayaban, marketing director Rica King, Belle Ortega, Ida Dizon, Dez Duran and Roselle Cua

THE BRILLIANT Fuentes team: Cheers to 15 years of publicity power.

ARANETA Center Inc. VP for marketing Grace Magno

ANGELO Valenton, Judith Dayrit, Liel Gonzales and Rochelle Leyba

ARANETA Center's Toti Palileo and Darlen Portugal, and Tina Cabanayan

MOI and Philippine Tatler publisher Irene Martel-Francisco

GIGI Mabanta, Joanne Rae Ramirez and Joy Wassmer

CITIBANK'S Florian Pascasio with Julio dela Cruz

MODELS Robby Mananquil and Valerie de los Santos

MASTERCARD International's Anton Corro and British Airways' Natalie Puey

HARBOUR Center CEO Mikee Romero and Marvee Espejo

ANTON Barretto with his prized Nokia N90 award for Best Photograph

15 years of PR success; power photo exhibit

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

FUENTES PUBLICITY NETWORK, ONE of the country's leading PR agencies, celebrated 15 awesome years in the public relations industry with an intimate gathering that drew top clients and media VIPs—all *tres* visible, *palanggas*.

The action took place at the trendy Mezze in Greenbelt 2. The anniversary bash had a very exclusive guest list, which hinted at the fantastic agency's enviable clientele that includes some of the world's most recognized brands and multinational companies—from banking to retail, fashion and beauty, business and health, manufacturing and electronics.

We were welcomed by no less than the company president and founder, everyone's pal, **Edd Fuentes**, who established the company at first in the basement of his house in Malate.

What started as a one-man operation is now a super major industry player, providing PR services to big multinational and local companies in the country, specializing not just in corporate PR and marketing communications, but also in events management, below-the-line advertising and graphic design services.

According to Edd, "Most of our clients have been working with us for years, some even going as far back as 1990, which is our founding year."

Cool singer **Shanice Michaels** entertained us with a cool jazz number, *palanggas*.

Naturellement, what's a party without prizes and goodies raffled off to guests? Given away were Pizza Hut and Taco Bell gift certificates, Citibank shopping vouchers, Nivea and Imedeen beauty packs, and a hot Philips mobile phone.

Hey Edd, here's a toast to 15 years of publicity power! Cheers, *palangga*!

Hot photo exhibit

The city's social set flocked to the chic Red Resto at the Makati Shangri-La, *natch*, where Nokia and Metro Society unveiled the "Society on Society" photo exhibit.

The exhibit featured photographs of Manila's movers and shakers taken by some of the country's popular photographers, *palanggas*.

The photographic subjects were **Anton Huang, Richie Santos, Ting-Ting Cojuangco, Bianca Araneta, Sofia Zobel, Claudia Bermudez, Joel Tantoco, Imee Marcos, Georgina Wilson** and *moi*.

The featured photographers were **Jojo Guingona, Pancho Escaler, Monique Villonco, Amanda Luym, Bengy Toda, Victor Consunji, Butch Baluyut** and **Pepper Teehankee.**

We were introduced to Nokia's chi-chi N70 and N90, two imaging devices that are part of the powerful Nokia N series. Everyone was swooning over the phones, *palanggas*.

"No other mobile phone has state-of-the-art features such as "the N90's Carl Zeiss, optics for camera lens, 20-time digital zoom, and a range of capture scene settings, such as scenery, portrait, night and sports, that result in stunningly clear photos," explained Nokia's **Luanne Emi**, dahlings.

A distinguished few were handed out (just for that night) the hot, hot Nokia N70 and N90, so that they could serve as "official photographers" of the event. Then the photographer of the best photo was given—yes, you guessed it—a brand-new Nokia N70!

All the photos taken were printed by Kodak via Bluetooth printer.

After careful deliberation, the winner of the Nokia N70 was **Anton Barretto** of Pineapple. His winning photo was a shot of **Lizzie Zobel.**

Two Nokia hot shots were beaming with pride over the smashingly successful event: Nokia's popular country general manager, **Parikshit Bhasin**, and product manager, **Mike Smith.**

The entire Metro Society *famille*, headed by the brains behind the magazine (among other publications of ABS-CBN Publishing), **Thelma San Juan**, was on hand. Also present were Metro Society's **Raul Manzano, Philip Cu-Unjieng** and **Mia Borromeo.**

Dashing in late-ish was glamorous **Vicky Zubiri. DJ Montano, Miguel Rosales**, Shu Uemura's **Tina Tinio** and **Patrick Reyno** enjoyed the drinks. ABS-CBN's young hot couple, **Ernie Lopez** and **Jeena Llamas**, were there, as well as **Chu Chu Madrigal Eduque**, gorgeous **Bianca Valerio**, super fun **Melissa Martel, Eva Abesamis, Jojo Zabarte**, and Bulgari's top man, **Mario Katigbak.**

There were other guests, of course—all in nirvana over Nokia, *palanggas*.

PEPPER Teehankee and Monique Villonco try out the imaging features of Nokia N90.

ACE PHOTOGRAPHERS Jojo Guingona, Pancho Escaler and Victor Consunji

METRO Society's Raul Manzano with *moi* and Nokia's Luanne Emi

WORLD-CLASS photographer Bengy Toda with Metro and Mix Boutique's Mia Borromeo

METRO Society's Thelma San Juan and couturier Rhett Eala

MAN of all seasons Louie Cruz and Annie Ringor

LIZZIE Zobel tries out the Nokia N90 with Doris Magsaysay Ho.

WORLD-TRAVELER Menchu Katigbak photographs Ernie Lopez with the Nokia N90 as Stores Specialists Inc.'s Anton Huang gets a big laugh over it.

BUSINESSMAN Honorio Poblador and wife, attractive Sandy Castro, with Nokia country general manager Parikshit Bhasin and Mario Mamon

---

Mall launches own soundtrack

GOINGS ON

AYALA GREENBELT LAUNCHES THE COMPACT disc of Anton Ramos, the first compilation initiated by a mall, at 10 p.m. today, Jan. 20, at the M Café, Ayala Greenbelt. The launch event will have an open bar 11 p.m.-12 midnight. Margarita King and Miller Beer will be served during the open bar. DJ Ramos' compilation is Ayala Greenbelt's exclusive soundtrack. Shoppers will get one CD for a minimum purchase of P5,000 at Greenbelt establishments. Promo ends Feb. 2.

ACCREDITATION PROGRAM. The De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde's School of Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management (SHRIM) is offering the Expanded Tertiary Education Equivalency and Accreditation Program (ETEEAP) for people with no college degree. Cooks, chefs, executive housekeepers and front desk staff, among others, can now earn a BS-HRIM (Bachelor of Science in Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management) degree while they work. The ETEEAP is officially recognized by the Commission on Higher Education. It is very suitable for working professionals because of its flexibility. One-on-one sessions are held. Call 4007407, 4007408, and 5257562 or e-mail shrim@dls-csb.edu.ph.

SALE. French clothing line Lulu Castagnette holds its end-of-season sale until Jan. 31. The brand offers up to 70 percent off on jeans, blouses, T-shirts, skirts, shorts, dresses, jackets and swimwear. The Lulu Castagnette End of Season Sale is ongoing at its branches at 2/L Glorietta 4 and Rustan's U Floor at Alabang Town Center.

POST-GRADUATE PROGRAMS. The De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPaCE) is offering modules for professionals starting Jan. 28. The modules may be taken separately or as part of a program leading up to a post-graduate diploma. A short course on Tactical Sales Negotiations will also be offered. Classes are held 12:30-7:30 p.m., Saturdays, at the Angelo King International Center, Estrada cor. Arellano Sts., Malate, Manila. Call 4005425, 5238888 loc. 341-342 or e-mail space@dls-csb.edu.ph.

REUNION. The Marcelo H. del Pilar High School Class 1954 will hold a reunion on Jan. 28. A dinner dance will be held Jan. 29 at Westin Philippine Plaza hosted by the United States-Canada chapter. Call Higino de Castro (4264212) and Rodolfo Gonzales (044-6626284).

ENGLISH SEMINARS. Corban Communications Inc. is offering a new series of Easy English seminars for students, housewives and professionals, 2-5 p.m., Feb. 4 and 5. Call 8426665, 8093050 or 0917-6297718.

PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS. Photography seminars will be held Feb. 9-14 at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Makati. Call 8435341 or 8137420.

WEDDING FAIR. Philtrade Exhibits presents a wedding fair, "Kasalan sa Pilipinas," Feb. 11-12, at the Activity Area of Market! Market!, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Call 8253482/0804.

ALUMNI HOMECOMING. The Asian Institute of Electronics (AIE) and Asian College of Science and Technology (Acsat) had an alumni homecoming recently at the Acsat Gym on Aurora Boulevard. Founder Constancio Sia led the celebration. Dinner was prepared by the faculty and students of the Hotel and Restaurant Management Department. The event featured performances by Acsat alumni and students, including model and television personality Iya Villania.

TINTIN Bersola Babao

Lifestyle crowd gets busy this year

From page C1

by mayors. I want to retire but I fear I might start looking my age. Don't ask me about sex."

Philip Rodriguez: "To expand my RTW at the Ayala Center. I'm ecstatic over New Year and endless possibilities, knowing how far I can go as well as my limitations, but with hope in my heart."

Donnie Ramirez: "Slow down in my PR [business], travel more. I'm at a point where nothing excites me anymore except perhaps the prospect of good sex."

Marissa Lopa: "[It will be] another year of biting the bullet as far as my personal life is concerned: I will start my new year by filing a [petition for] annulment."

Marissa Fernan: "I like to do more things I truly enjoy even if it means having to reinvent myself. I am at a point when my life roles as daughter, sister, aunt and friend are most important to me."

Dave de Jesus: "Diet, work out, make Thailand the top destination of Filipinos. I'm in the prime of my life. Life begins at 40something."

Bonjin Bolinao: "To carry on the challenging but enjoyable work for 25 years of PR and communication management. Writer **Florence King** says there are four stages in a woman's life. I'm at stage three, between siren and dear old thing. It lasts about 15 years, from 50 to social security, but they are the best 15 years in a woman's life—debriefing years, detoxification years—when a woman can shed her skin and become, for a brief shining moment, a good ol' girl."

Mike de la Rosa: "To get my RTW online and going live on the web. I have contentment and appreciation for what I've accomplished, looking ahead to new trends, ideas that will continue to stimulate my creative juices."

Tess Vargas: "I'm turning 50 and I'd like to slow down and be more conscious of my health. I have two smaller children to care for. I still have a lot of goals to fulfill; I'd like to do these with the least stress. I don't have to be filthy rich. I just want to enjoy the good quality of life with my loved ones."

Tintin Bersola Babao: "To renovate, expand our home, to pursue [further] studies, publish my second children's book. Am at the crossroads, thinking out of the box, breaking barriers people have set for me."

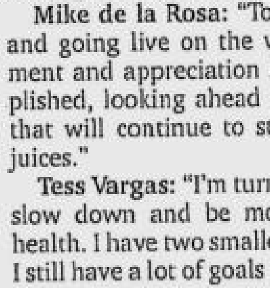
Anton Barretto: "I will make a conscious effort to be self-indulgent. In the past years I've been generous and charitable—not a bad thing, but this time around, I will include myself as one of the top beneficiaries. Travel and art—a perfect way to pamper my spirit."

Tes Pasola: "To come up with more untapped design concepts that would not just give pride but add to Filipino identity… I am at a happy-but-still-willing-to-reinvent-myself mode. Maybe switch career to 'passion design?'"

Rachy Cuna: "More than artistic gratification, my work now provides great opportunity to promote not only myself but also the country… when I can finally say I am proudly Filipino and I want the whole world to know why I am proud to be so."

Cesar Gaupo: "To create more lifestyle brands for the international market. I'm at the most exciting time of my career."

To be continued



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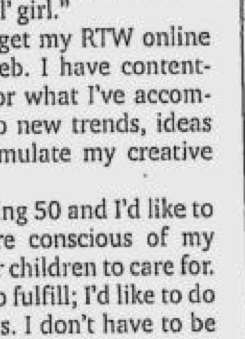

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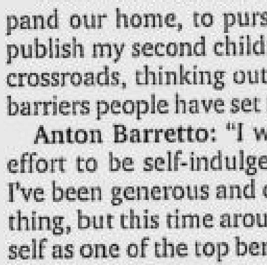

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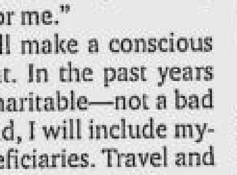

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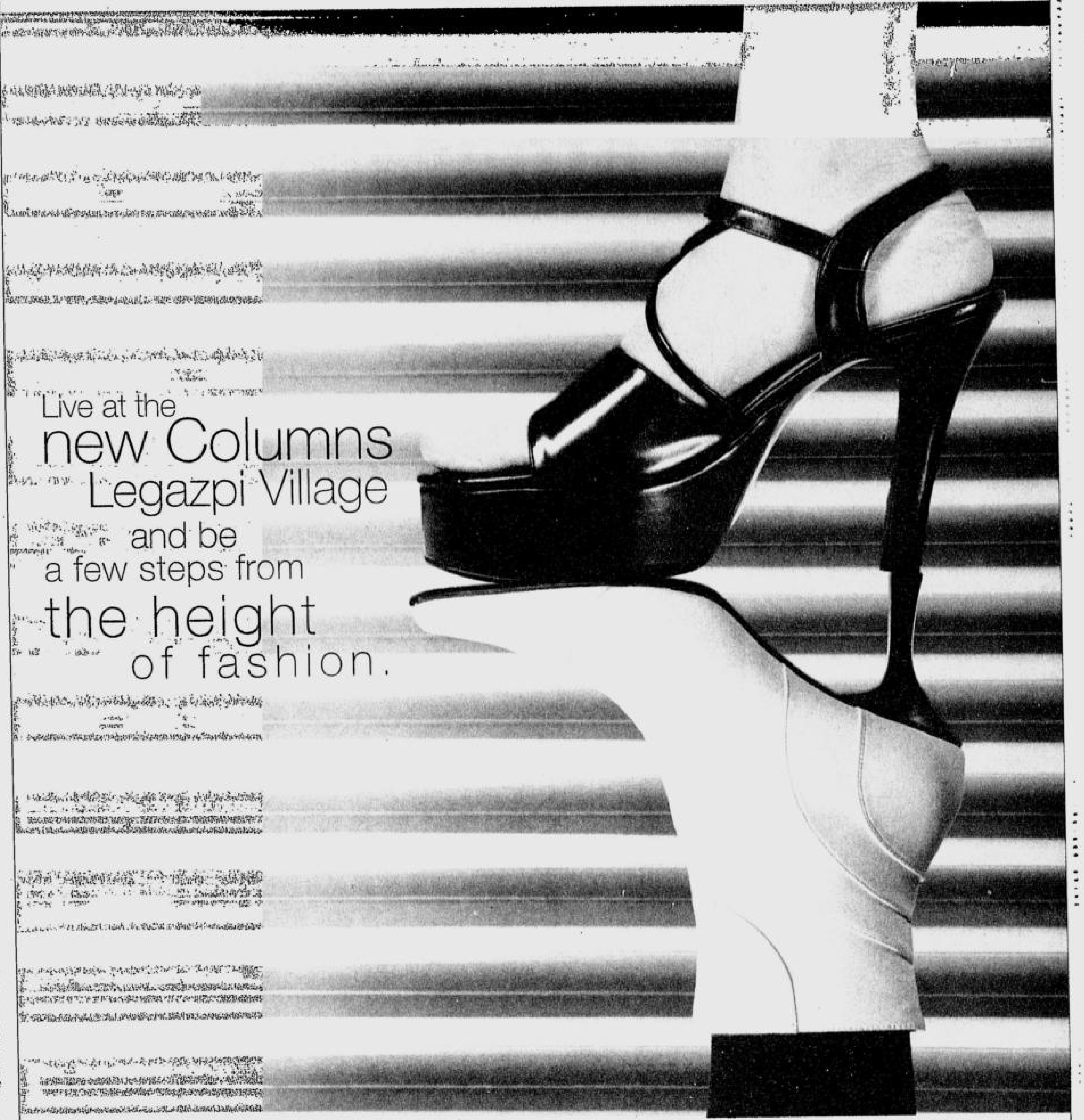

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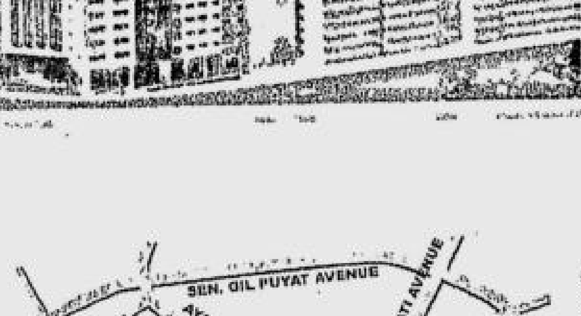

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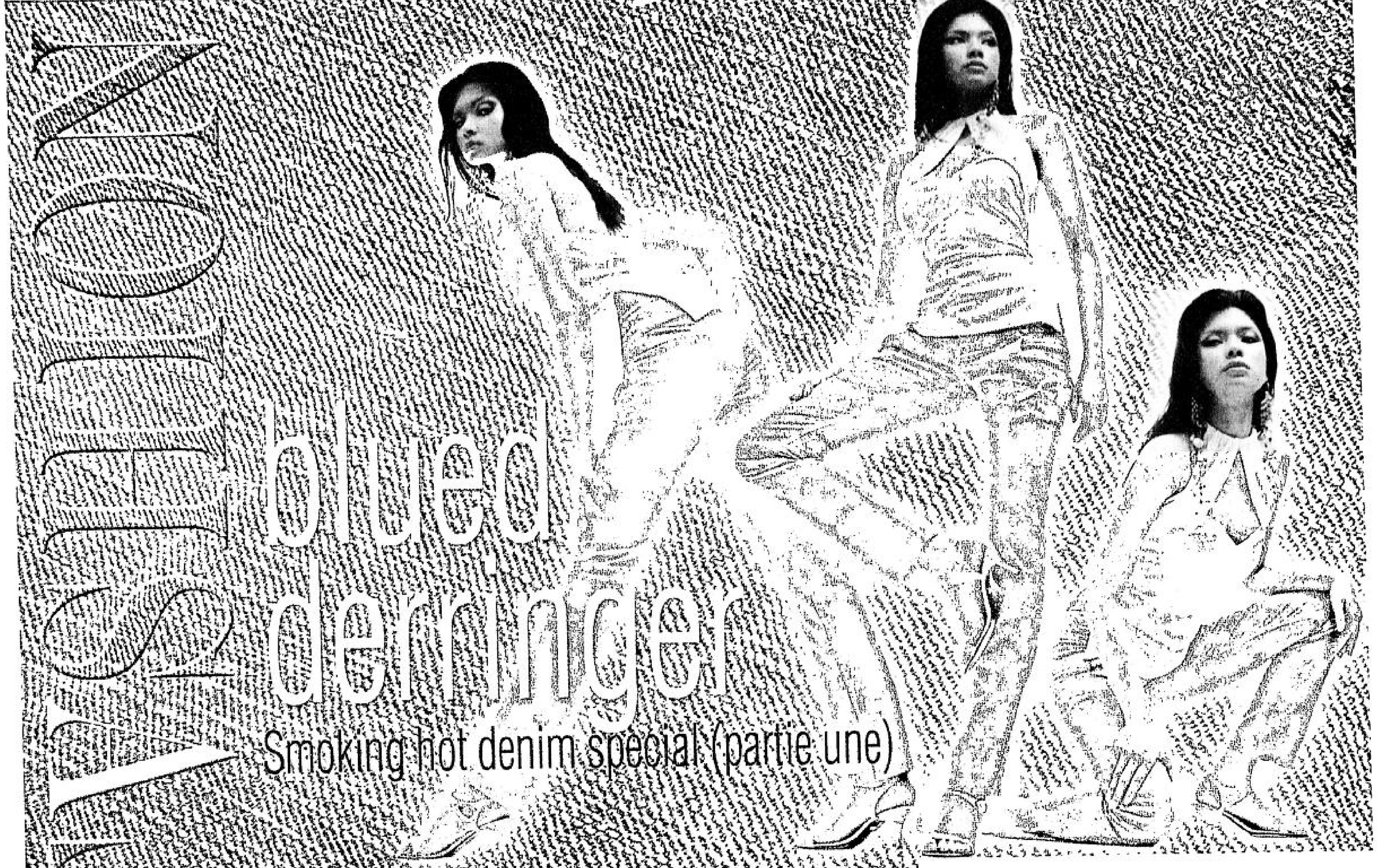
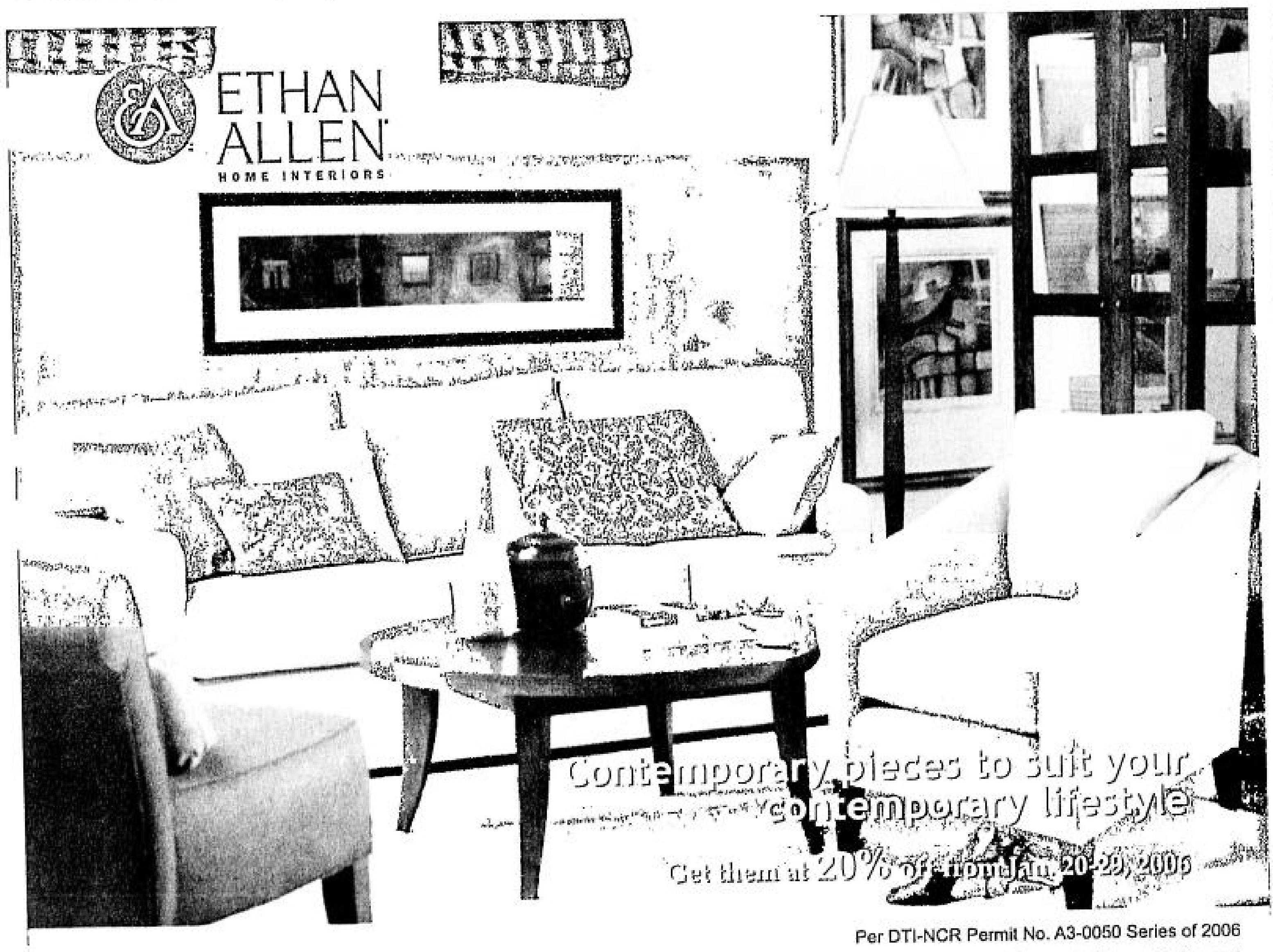


blued derringer

Smoking hot denim special (partie une)

PHOTOGRAPHY XANDER ANGELES/EDGE OF LIGHT
STYLING MILLET ARZAGA
HAIR AND MAKEUP ABBY ARENAS-DE LEON FOR LANCÔME
USING "THE ENCHANTRESS" SPRING COLLECTION 2006
MODEL CHAPSICAL CARRIE'S

WHITE silk top by Jerome Salaya Ang, to order at (02) 2520067. Pink pants, P5,280, from Fornarina. Shoes, P1,195, from Catch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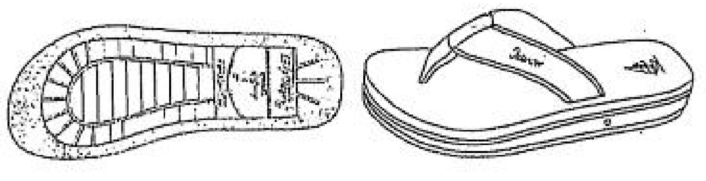

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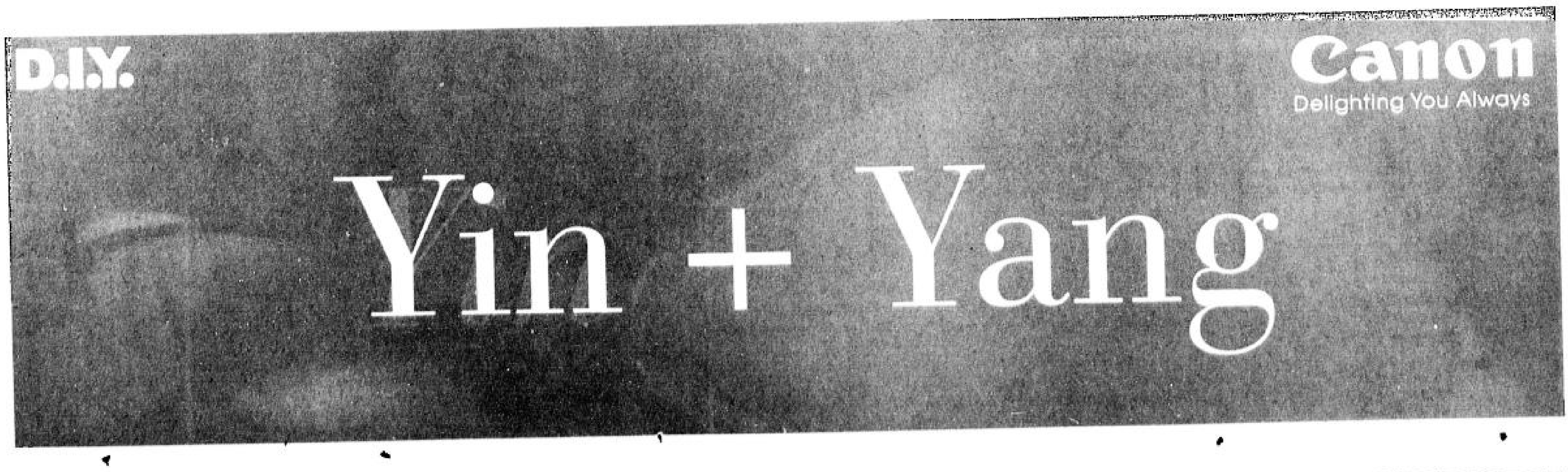
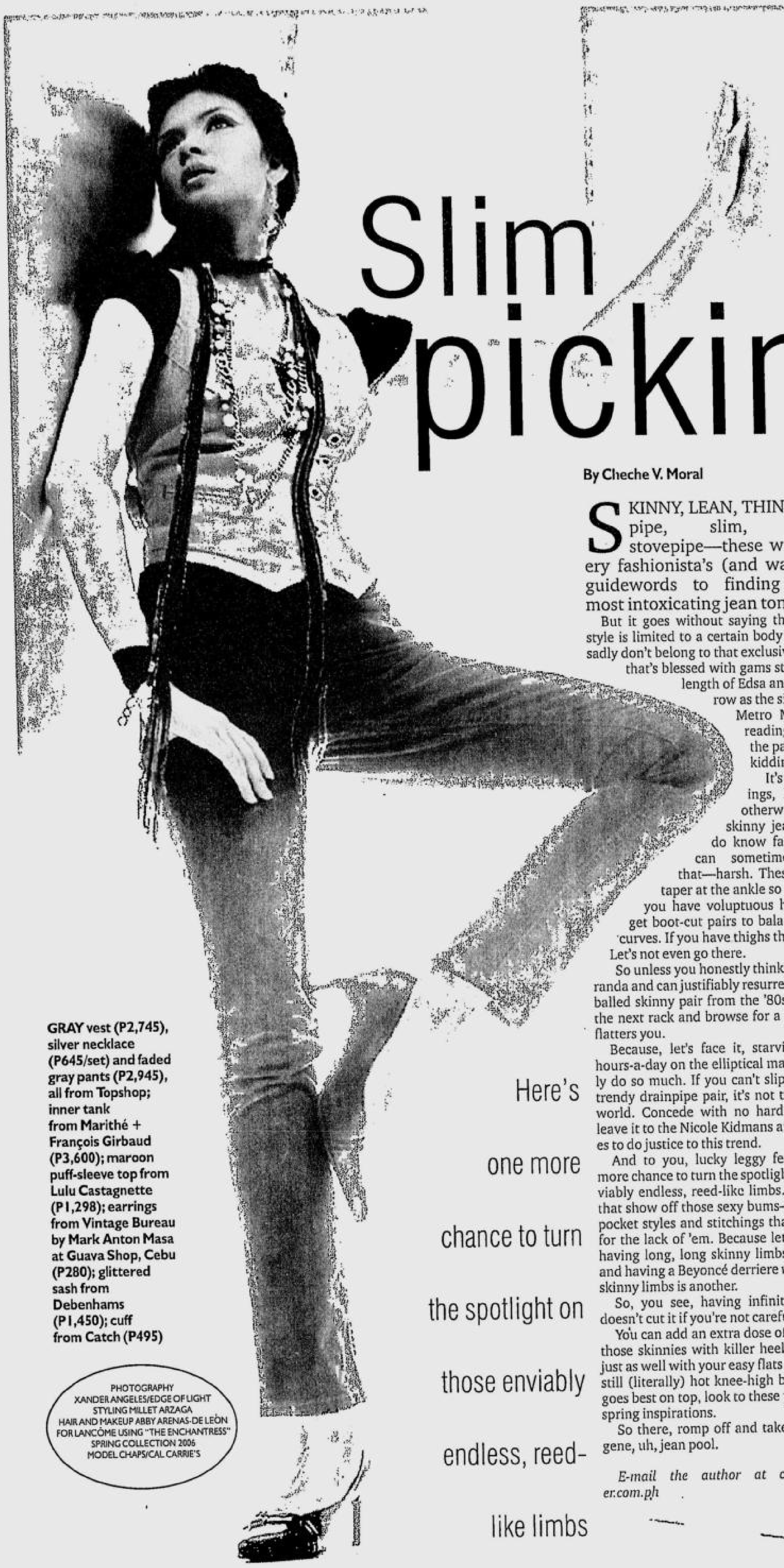


Slim pickings

By Cheche V. Moral



SKINNY, LEAN, THIN, DRAINpipe, slim, tapered, stovepipe—these will be every fashionista's (and wannabe's) guidewords to finding spring's most intoxicating jean tonic.

But it goes without saying that this jean style is limited to a certain body type. If you sadly don't belong to that exclusive gene pool that's blessed with gams stretching the length of Edsa and are as narrow as the side streets of Metro Manila, stop reading and turn the page now. Just kidding...

It's slim pickings, literally and otherwise, these skinny jeans. And we do know fashion trends can sometimes be like that—harsh. These new jeans taper at the ankle so it's a no-no if you have voluptuous hips. Instead, get boot-cut pairs to balance off those curves. If you have thighs that are, well... Let's not even go there.

So unless you honestly think you *are* a Miranda and can justifiably resurrect your mothballed skinny pair from the '80s, move on to the next rack and browse for a cut that truly flatters you.

Because, let's face it, starving and two-hours-a-day on the elliptical machine can only do so much. If you can't slip nicely into a trendy drainpipe pair, it's not the end of the world. Concede with no hard feelings and leave it to the Nicole Kidmans and Kate Mosses to do justice to this trend.

And to you, lucky leggy few, here's one more chance to turn the spotlight on those enviably endless, reed-like limbs. Opt for pairs that show off those sexy bums—or ones with pocket styles and stitchings that compensate for the lack of 'em. Because let's be realistic: having long, long skinny limbs is one thing, and having a Beyoncé derriere *with* long, long skinny limbs is another.

So, you see, having infinite poles alone doesn't cut it if you're not careful.

You can add an extra dose of fatal factor to those skinnies with killer heels. But they go just as well with your easy flats or under those still (literally) hot knee-high boots. On what goes best on top, look to these pages for some spring inspirations.

So there, romp off and take pride in your gene, uh, jean pool.

E-mail the author at cmoral@inquirer.com.ph

Here's one more chance to turn the spotlight on those enviably endless, reed-like limbs

GRAY vest (P2,745), silver necklace (P645/set) and faded gray pants (P2,945), all from Topshop; inner tank from Marithé + François Girbaud (P3,600); maroon puff-sleeve top from Lulu Castagnette (P1,298); earrings from Vintage Bureau by Mark Anton Masa at Guava Shop, Cebu (P280); glittered sash from Debenhams (P1,450); cuff from Catch (P495)

PHOTOGRAPHY
XANDER ANGELES/EDGE OF LIGHT
STYLING MILLET ARZAGA
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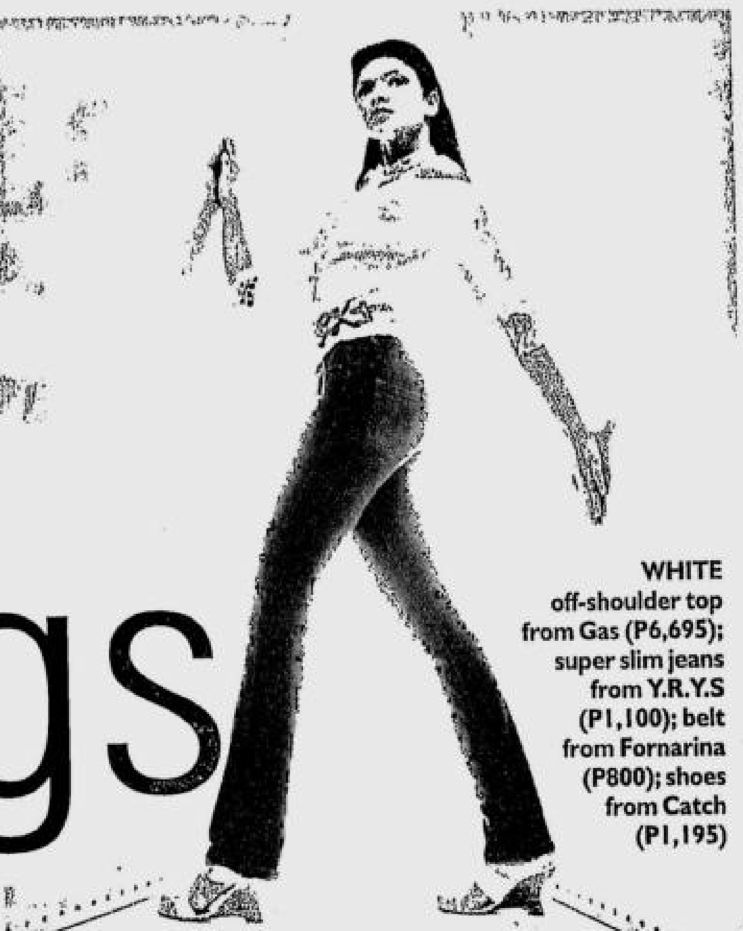
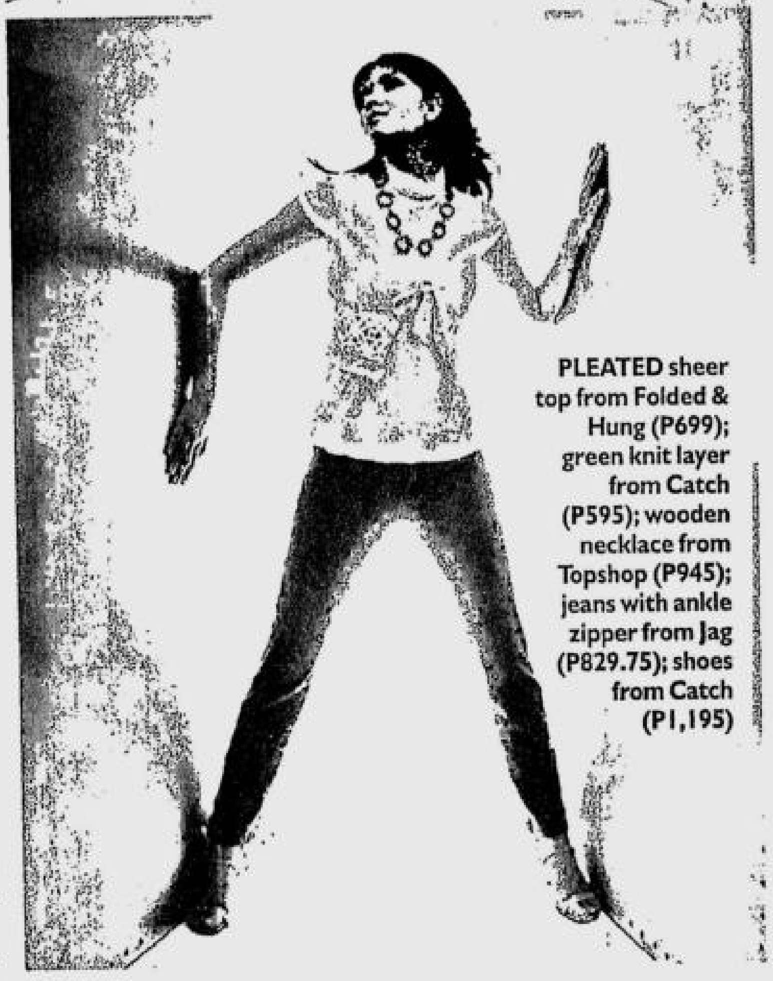
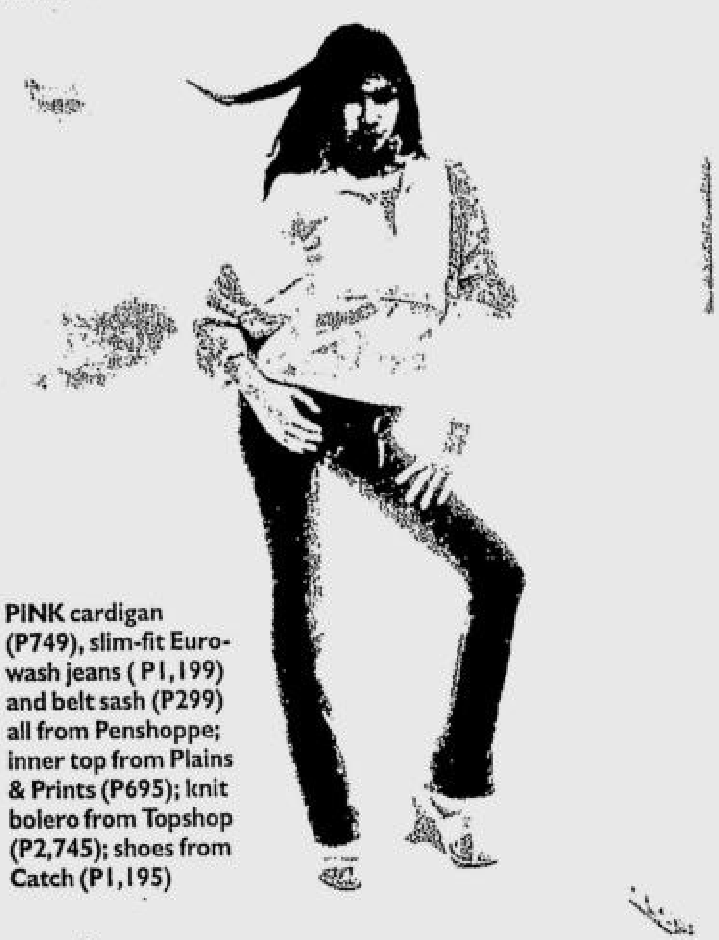


WHITE off-shoulder top from Gas (P6,695); super slim jeans from Y.R.Y.S (P1,100); belt from Fornarina (P800); shoes from Catch (P1,195)



PLEATED sheer top from Folded & Hung (P699); green knit layer from Catch (P595); wooden necklace from Topshop (P945); jeans with ankle zipper from Jag (P829.75); shoes from Catch (P1,195)



PINK cardigan (P749), slim-fit Euro-wash jeans (P1,199) and belt sash (P299) all from Penshoppe; inner top from Plains & Prints (P695); knit bolero from Topshop (P2,745); shoes from Catch (P1,195)

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Denim denizens

Text and photos by Genea Padilla

DENIM (SERGE DE Nimes), Jean (Genoese), Dungarees (Dungri)—Different names for the hard-wearing, indigo-blue cloth that has gone on to become "the fabric phenomenon of the century."

From its work-pants roots, denim jeans have evolved into an icon far beyond American pop culture. The humble denim has not only outlived its reputation for basic utility. It has transcended it.

Today, it is an essential part of our wardrobe. Having the perfect pair of jeans is equivalent to having the perfect "little black dress." It is the uniform of the young and the semi-retired alike.

Fashion's influence is evident in the material's evolution, and vice versa. But for all of fashion's dictates, jeans are still work pants. They just work longer hours and on just about all types of people, from everyday working men and women to rock stars and billionaire CEOs (we hear Bill Gates—although more of a chinos guy—wears jeans, too).

We wear them at every opportunity, barring a serious breach of the dress code.

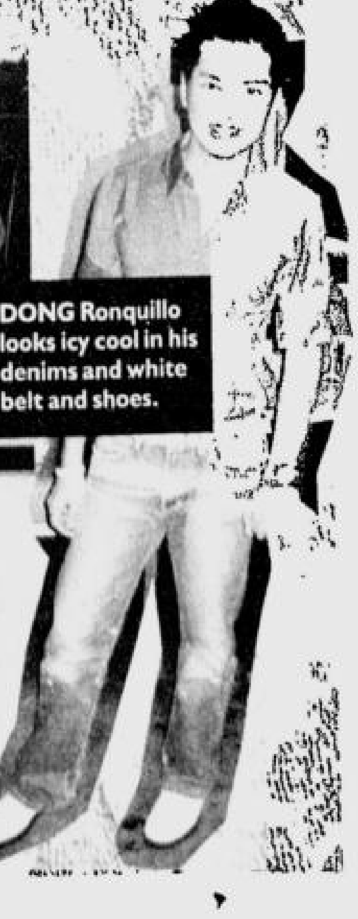
To take a bit from Mr. Strauss: Jeans have never gone out of style and probably never will.

MARCO Torres looks young and comfy in his trendy get up.

MICHELLE Tinsay enjoys a cold brew in her jean skirt and flip-flops.

STYLISH party girl glams up a pair of lowly cut-offs.

COOL shopper takes time out for a snapshot .



DONG Ronquillo looks icy cool in his denims and white belt and shoes.

It's in the jeans!

These four women understand that a great figure does not always translate to a size 2

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

REVEL IN THE FACT THAT ALL women are shaped differently. We are all born with particular body types and no matter how hard we try, we simply have to accept that there are certain things we cannot change.

Sure, we can enhance and improve specific areas or body parts but certain factors will stay the same—height and bone structure, for example.

J.Lo will never be a Kate Moss. And Oprah, no matter how many times she visits the gym, will never achieve Tyra's slim, toned body. And yet, these women all look great and exude cool confidence. Stylists and designer clothes aside, this is probably because they've come to accept who they are, what they're born with and, in the process, learned to dress accordingly.

The four women featured today also know what suits them best. They understand that a great figure does not always translate to a size 2. Here they show us how to go about choosing the right pair of jeans for their particular body type.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

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FRANK HOEFSMIT
(WWW.FRANKHOEFSMIT.COM)
MAKEUP LOURD OF MAC
USING THE "LINGERIE" COLLECTION
HAIR EMPHASIS SALON

Petite

The secret to dressing well is in creating the right proportions, says 26-year-old Che Barretto. To prove her point, the diminutive architect (she stands a mere 5'1") from New York elongates her appearance by choosing pieces that help create vertical lines that draw the eyes upward.

She favors slim pants, as these give her the option of folding them into cuffs and wearing flats. And although she prefers wearing heels that make her look taller, she needs stylish jeans options for flats simply because she does a lot of walking in Manhattan.

Che's tips:

- Jeans should not be too flared. Stick to straight, bootleg or slightly flared varieties.
- When choosing the length, make sure the hem falls just above the floor (half an inch from the floor would be good) so that most of your heel is covered. This way, legs will look longer.
- You can also elongate your torso by choosing jeans with a waistline that falls just below your belly button.
- Look for vertical stitching along the sides to create the illusion of length.

TYLER Victorian-inspired top and Joe's Jeans

TYLER ruffled jacket and 7 for Mankind jeans

Pear-shaped

Most women have pear-shaped figures akin to 32-year-old Theresa Santos' body type. Through the years, Theresa has learned what styles of clothes best suit her figure, including the type of jeans to disguise her flaws and accentuate her assets.

Theresa's tips:

- Bootleg or slightly flared jeans will balance off curvy hips.
- Choose mid-waist jeans instead of an ultra-low waist style.
- Stretch jeans that provide support and hug and shape the hips is a good option.
- Opt for long jeans that you can wear with heels to create longer gams.

VINTAGE tee, Ilaya cropped jacket, Levi's 540, Bayo silver flats

Waif-like

One can't help but visualize a young Kate Moss upon meeting beauty editor Ria Francisco-Prieto. The fragile-looking, ultra slim 28-year-old has long limbs that make her look taller than her actual 5'4 ½" height.

Luckily, she can wear almost any style of jeans, including those up-to-the-minute straight-leg styles that hug from hip to ankle. The only cuts she avoids are the extra-baggy varieties that overwhelm and drown her slight frame.

Ria's tips:

- Comfort is key so jeans should always feel good.
- Find a pair that does not need alterations so you're sure that the fit does not change.

Curvy and voluptuous

Twenty-year-old Katrina Padilla has accepted the fact that she is not and never will be supermodel thin. In fact, she has learned to celebrate and accept the body she was born with. As a result, she comes across as far more confident than a typical twentysomething. Women double her age could learn a thing or two from this wise young lady.

Katrina's tips:

- Don't be scared to show your assets. Choose jeans that emphasize and make your "ass-ets" look good.
- Opt for flared jeans to balance your curves.
- Accept your body type and dress accordingly.

MANGO knit top, Tilt jeans, Banana Republic sandals, La Elegancia diamond studded hoops

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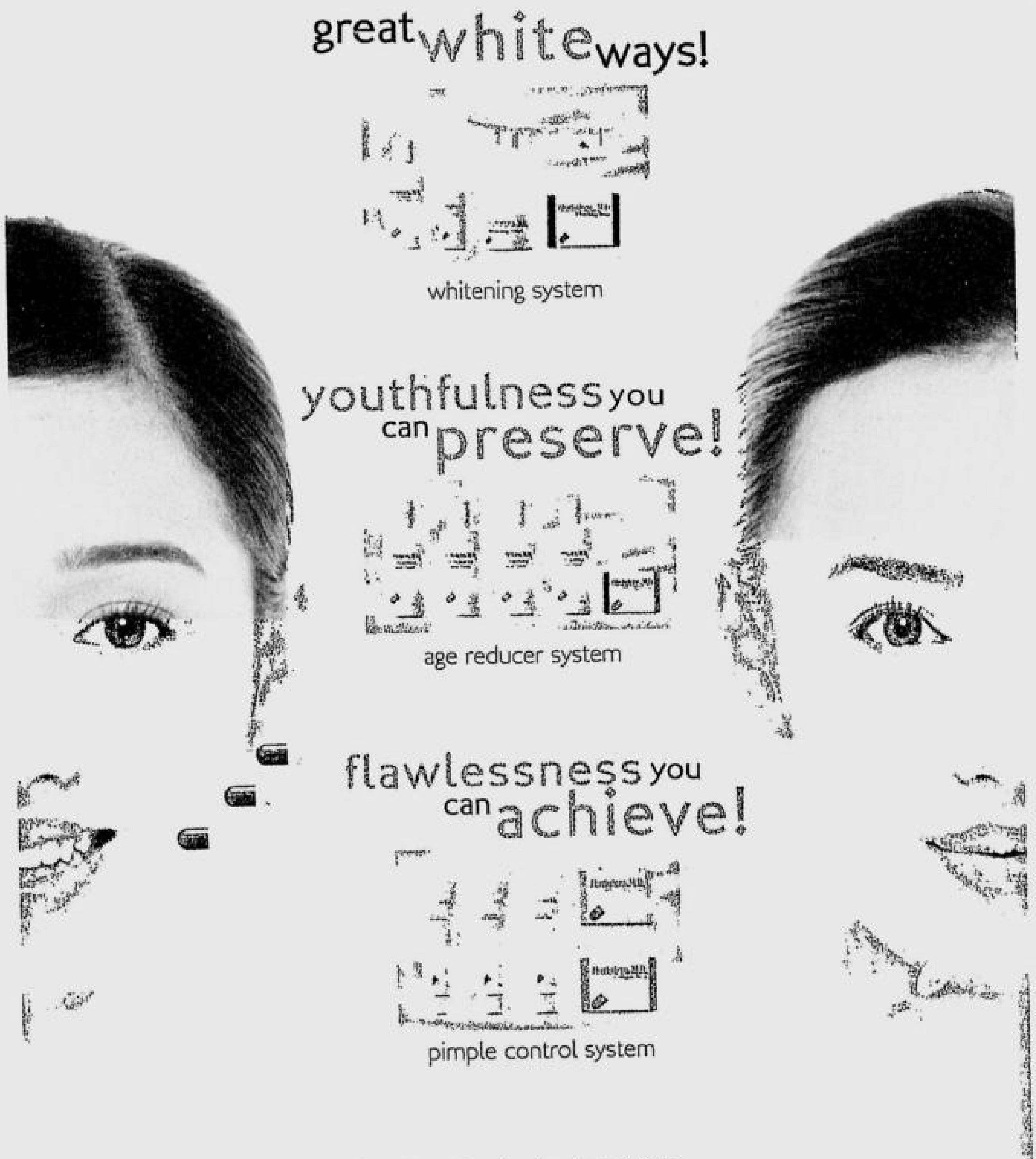

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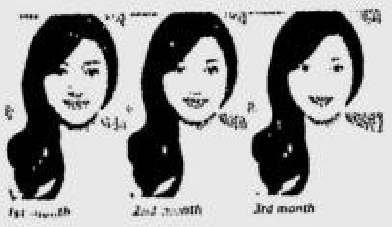
Whitening Capsule

Achieving porcelain-white, celebrity complexion and making it last is a process that goes beyond the usual skin-deep solutions. Thanks to the discovery of Glutathione, getting more permanent results has finally become so effortless.

Glutathione is essentially a natural, immunity-boosting tripetide amino acid that is found in the body. Regular intake of Glutathione has been tested and proven for its positive "effect": whitening of dark skin! No wonder, it has been dubbed as the "prescription-of-the-moment" by Hollywood dermatologists, thus earning its stature as one of the most coveted, "to-die-for" beauty arsenals among celebrities socialites---and practically anyone who can afford it.

However, with the cutting-edge expertise of Hortaleza, M.D., the once-prohibitively priced Glutathione is now made accessible with new Hortaleza, M.D. Illuminous Whitening Capsule! Enjoy the multi-benefits of Glutathione whitening and anti-ageing, plus Vitamins C and E with Alpha Lipoic Acid. All in one capsule for only ₱39.75 each! That's 53% more affordable than other brands! Get it in packs of 30's and 10's at all HBC Home of Beauty Exclusives Stores nationwide. Now isn't that illuminating news for your skin?



Youthfulness you can preserve!
Hortaleza, M.D.
Age Reducer System

Do you know that 40 is the new 30? Now, more than ever, skin has never been so sexy beyond 40! Youthful skin is here to stay. In an age where every second counts, count on Hortaleza, M.D. Age Reducer System to give ageing skin a second chance. It rejuvenates skin while erasing tell-tale lines completely!

Get an Age Reducer starter kit for only ₱275*!

Flawlessness you can achieve!
Hortaleza, M.D.
Pimple Control System

Acne or zits? Turn to the Hortaleza, M.D. Pimple Control System amazingly cleanses, purges, heals and purifies skin to the last pore! Bid acne-inducing oils goodbye! Let smooth, flawless skin rule!

Get a Pimple Control starter kit for only ₱285*!

* Prices subject to change without prior notice.

New Hortaleza, M.D.®
The Authority in Skin Care

FREE FACIAL!
Text FREE FACIAL to 09189215520 to avail of an exclusive free facial service at selected HBC branches nationwide. Present your cell phone with confirmation message from HBC Customer Care. Offer is good from January 20 to April 30 2006

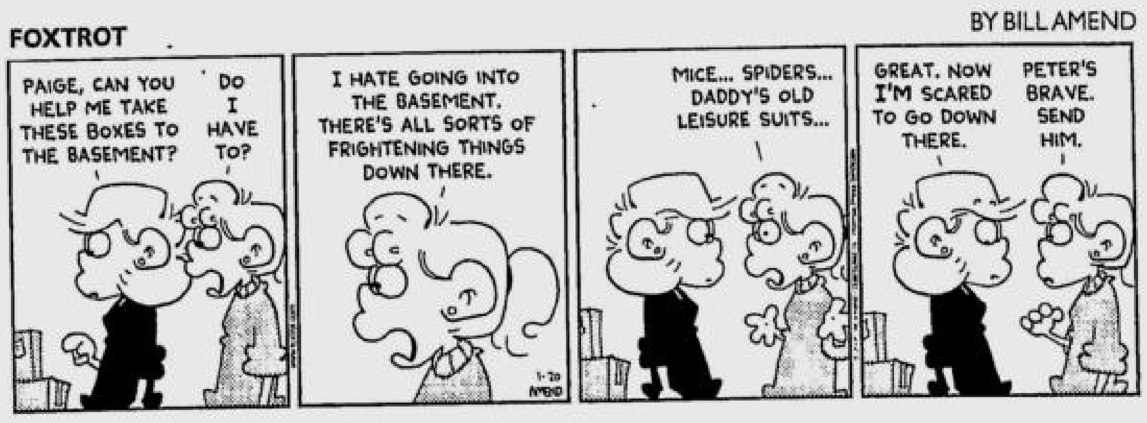
D.I.Y.
Canon
Delighting You Always
Lock + Key

COMIC*Relief*

e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

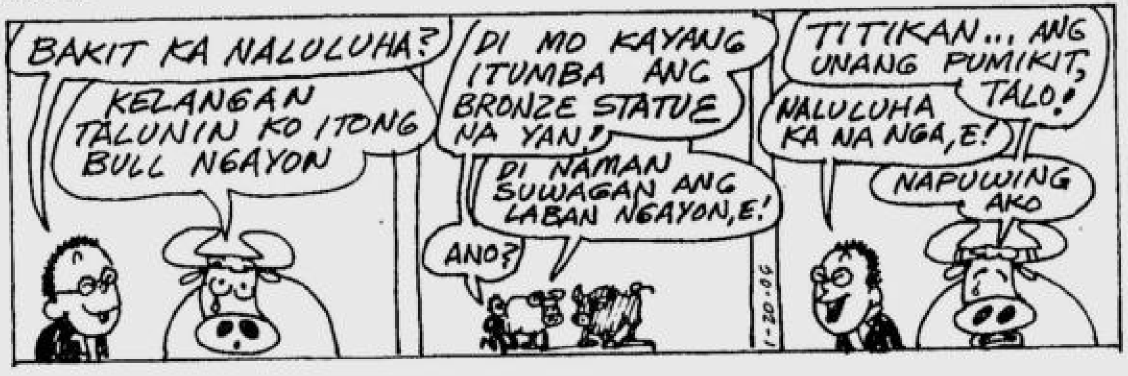
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


PAIGE, CAN YOU HELP ME TAKE THESE BOXES TO THE BASEMENT?
DO I HAVE TO?
I HATE GOING INTO THE BASEMENT. THERE'S ALL SORTS OF FRIGHTENING THINGS DOWN THERE.
1-20
AMEND
MICE... SPIDERS... DADDY'S OLD LEISURE SUITS...
GREAT. NOW I'M SCARED TO GO DOWN THERE.
PETER'S BRAVE. SEND HIM.

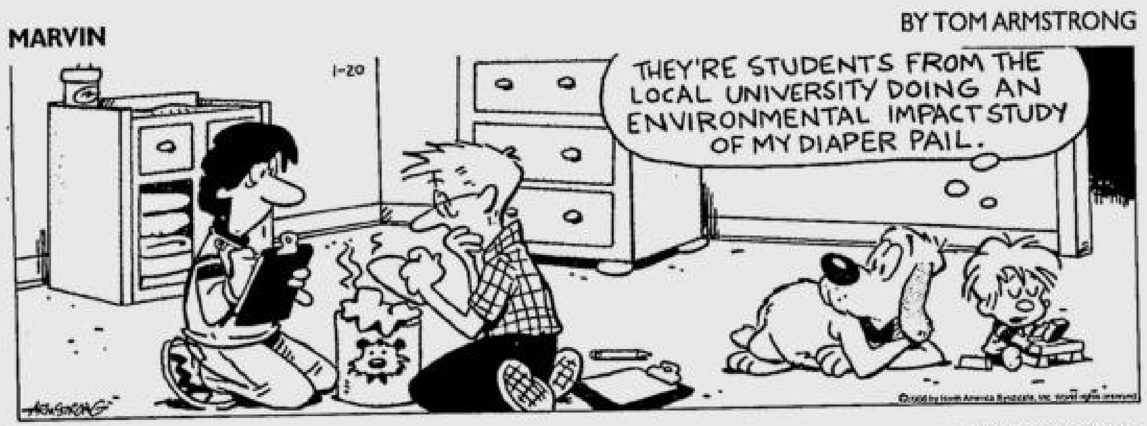
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BAKIT KA NALULUHA?
KELANGAN TALUNIN KO ITONG BULL NGAYON
DI MO KAYANG ITUMBA ANG BRONZE STATUE NA YAN!
DI NAMAN SUWAGAN ANG LABAN NGAYON, E!
ANO?
1-20-06
TITIKAN... ANG UNANG PUMIKIT, TALO!
NALULUHA KA NA NGA, E!
NAPUWING AKO

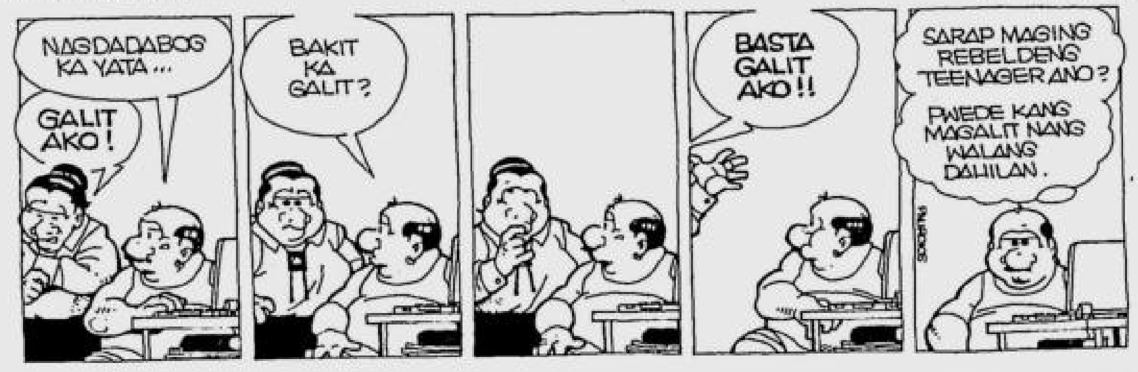
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


1-20
THEY'RE STUDENTS FROM THE LOCAL UNIVERSITY DOING AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY OF MY DIAPER PAIL.
ARMSTRONG

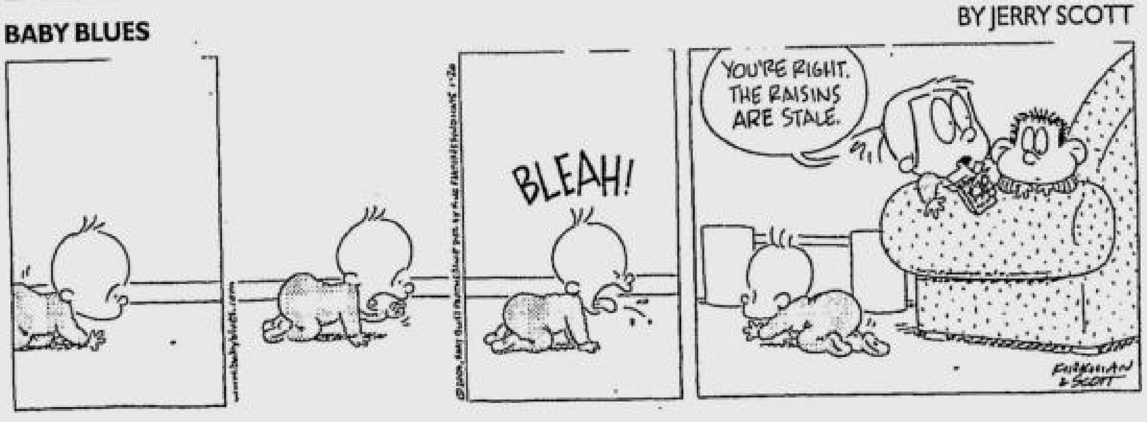
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAGDADABOG KA YATA...
GALIT AKO!
BAKIT KA GALIT?
BASTA GALIT AKO!!
SARAP MAGING REBELDENG TEENAGER ANO?
PWEDE KANG MAGALIT NANG WALANG DAHILAN.

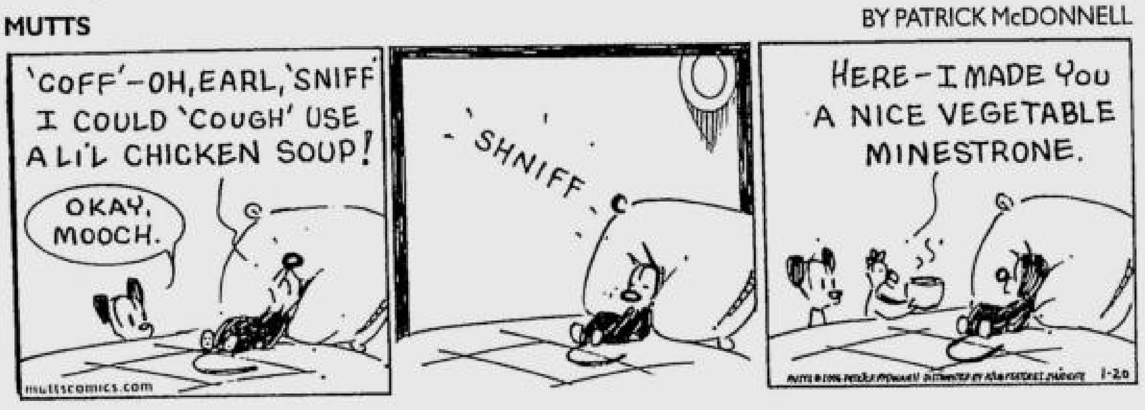
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


BLEAH!
YOU'RE RIGHT. THE RAISINS ARE STALE.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

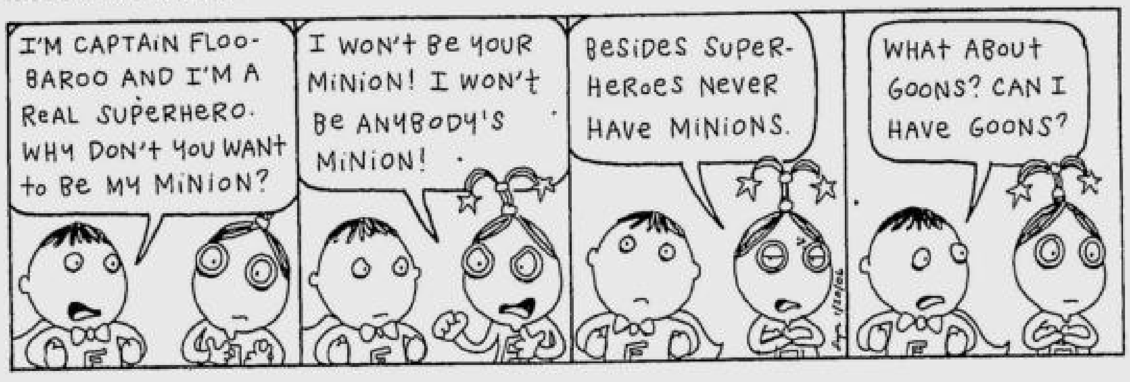
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


'COFF'-OH, EARL, 'SNIFF' I COULD 'COUGH' USE A LI'L CHICKEN SOUP!
OKAY, MOOCH.
SHNIFF
HERE-I MADE YOU A NICE VEGETABLE MINESTRONE.
muttscomics.com
1-20

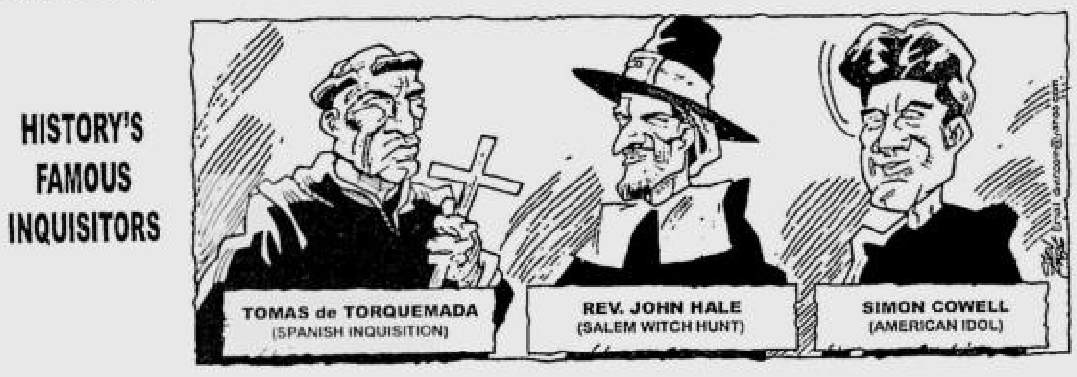
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I'M CAPTAIN FLOO-BAROO AND I'M A REAL SUPERHERO. WHY DON'T YOU WANT TO BE MY MINION?
I WON'T BE YOUR MINION! I WON'T BE ANYBODY'S MINION!
BESIDES SUPER-HEROES NEVER HAVE MINIONS.
WHAT ABOUT GOONS? CAN I HAVE GOONS?

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


HISTORY'S FAMOUS INQUISITORS
TOMAS de TORQUEMADA
(SPANISH INQUISITION)
REV. JOHN HALE
(SALEM WITCH HUNT)
SIMON COWELL
(AMERICAN IDOL)

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have two distinct sides: In one way, you are warm-hearted, generous, fun-loving and entertaining, but in another way, you are focused, serious, dedicated and resilient. You're very alive, and very genuine. In the year ahead, close relationships and partnerships will become your primary focus. Some partnerships will end; some will begin.

Birthdate of: George Burns, comedian; Bill Maher, comedian; David Lynch, director.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Be open to the generosity of others. If people want to give you things (and in the months to come they do), don't look for attached strings. Just say thank you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Partnerships and close friendships are warm and endearing now and for the rest of the year. This is a lovely time to enjoy the company of others!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Without question, your job can really improve this year. A change of duties, a change of jobs, a change of working conditions—something happens. (Maybe your evil boss leaves.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Plan on a vacation this year. Now and for most of 2006, you can expect one of the happiest, most carefree years in more than a decade. Romance, love affairs, vacations and the arts shine! Enjoy children.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): In the year ahead, you can expect one of the most joyful, pleasant times with home and family. You will be blessed with feelings of abundance. Lucky you!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is an excellent year for you because your all-around optimism and your belief about your future are positive and hopeful. This makes such a difference in your life.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You can definitely earn more money this year. Count on it. You will also be spending more. It looks like you're moving into a bigger league.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is an extremely fortunate year for your sign. For the first time in 12 years, Jupiter is back in Scorpio! This attracts good things to you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is definitely a time of preparation for you. Everything you worked for since 1994 is coming to a harvest in the next two to three years.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You have a wonderful, popular year ahead! Not only will you enjoy good times with friends, your professional association with others will improve as well.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You are very fortunate this year, dear Aquarius. Your career and your job can improve beautifully! Whatever you do, everyone thinks you're the cat's meow.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Travel opportunities and chances to explore publishing, the media and further education will come to you this year. Keep your bags packed and your plants watered.

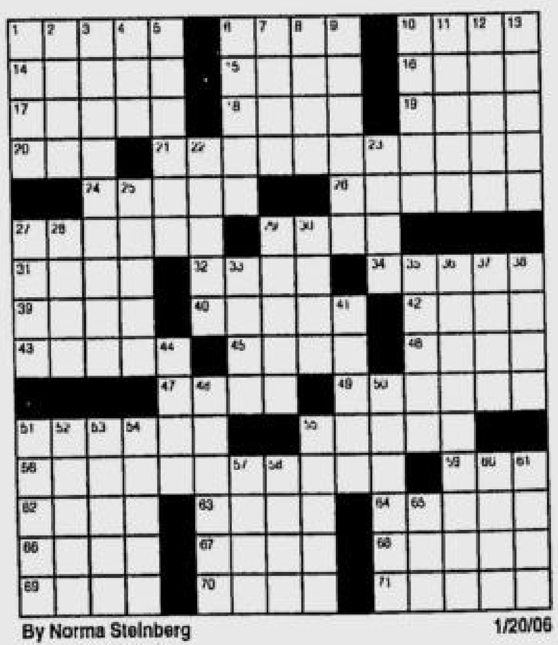
DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Holding a grudge against
6 Fisherman's chum
10 Read, as a bar code
14 Writer Segal
15 Part of a foot
16 Writer Lofts
17 Roast host
18 Patella's place
19 Leave out
20 Clicking sound
21 Where rich birds live?
24 Daughter of Ops
26 In conclusion
27 Sets to rest
29 Sudden shock
31 Brock and Costello
32 Trampled (on)
34 Helpers
39 "Of __ and Men"
40 Transmits
42 Go by car
43 Low joint
45 Shuttle grp.
46 "O don fatale" or "Vissi d'arte"
47 Country on the Mekong
49 Talk show host Williams
51 Minister
55 Kind of boom
56 Crow camaraderie
59 That guy's
62 Grow weary
63 John Doe's dog?
64 Highly skilled
66 Eve's address
67 Motel room
68 Actress Witherspoon
69 Marsh grass
70 Former Majority Leader Trent
71 Railroad hub

DOWN

1 Bump into
2 Appendages
3 Bandstand chicken?
4 Half a natural 21
5 Conjecture
6 Two-wheelers
7 Actress Paquin
8 Frosts
9 "Sometime __ give a war..." (Sandburg)
10 Winter falls
11 Ajax rival
12 Disney mermaid
13 Dapper
22 Avian abodes
23 Casual farewell
25 Stand for art
27 Soprano Gluck
28 Butcher's cut
29 Vaccine pioneer Salk
30 Bettor's info
33 Clinton's AG
35 Tabriz resident
36 Inexpensive for a chick
37 Falco or Brickell
38 Navy commando
41 South Pacific island group
44 "The Time Machine" race
48 Disingenuous
50 Charge!
51 Falk or Fonda
52 Stage whisper
53 Binge
54 Statistical inclination
55 Actor Balo
57 Flintstones' pet
58 Check for typos
60 __ facto
61 Proofer's notation
65 Actress Ruby



By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA

1/20/06

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

H	A	R	I	■	S	O	L	O	■	E	B	B	E	D
E	R	I	N	■	U	K	E	S	■	N	L	E	R	S
A	C	T	S	■	R	A	E	S	■	B	O	A	S	T
T	H	E	O	N	L	Y	J	O	B	A	T	■	■	■
■	■	■	L	O	I	S	■	■	E	N	C	A	M	P
S	T	E	E	V	E	■	W	H	I	C	H	Y	O	U
N	E	E	■	A	S	C	I	I	■	■	Y	E	L	P
O	E	R	■	S	T	A	R	T	A	T	■	A	D	A
O	T	I	S	■	■	D	E	E	R	E	■	Y	E	T
T	H	E	T	O	P	I	S	■	R	E	C	E	D	E
S	E	R	A	P	E	■	■	I	O	N	S	■	■	■
■	■	■	D	I	G	G	I	N	G	A	H	O	L	E
A	T	R	I	A	■	E	D	D	A	■	A	R	I	L
R	E	B	U	T	■	S	E	E	N	■	R	E	M	S
C	L	I	M	E	■	T	E	X	T	■	P	O	P	E

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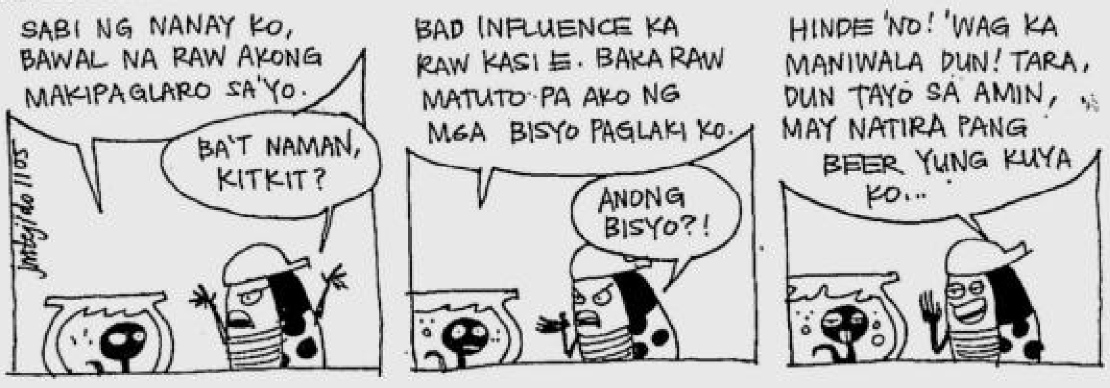
1/20/06

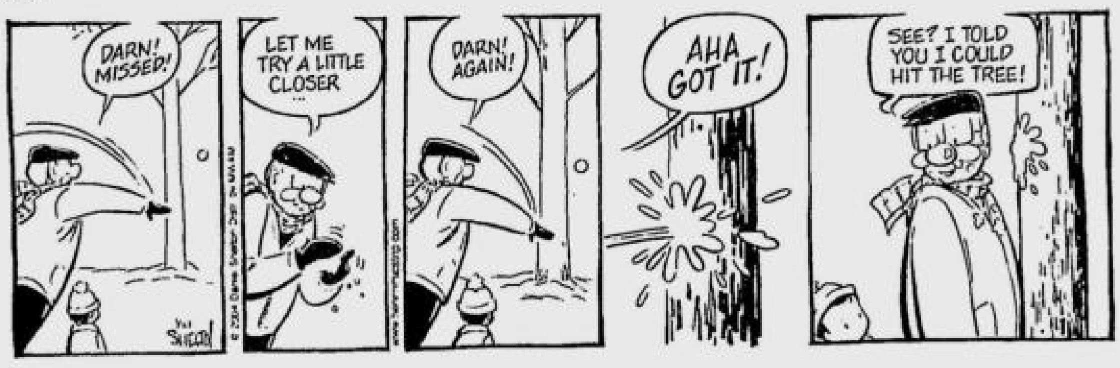
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


SABI NG NANAY KO, BAWAL NA RAW AKONG MAKIPAGLARO SA'YO.
BA'T NAMAN, KITKIT?
BAD INFLUENCE KA RAW KASI E. BAKA RAW MATUTO PA AKO NG MGA BISYO PAGLAKI KO.
ANONG BISYO?!
HINDE 'NO! 'WAG KA MANIWALA DUN! TARA, DUN TAYO SA AMIN, MAY NATIRA PANG BEER YUNG KUYA KO...

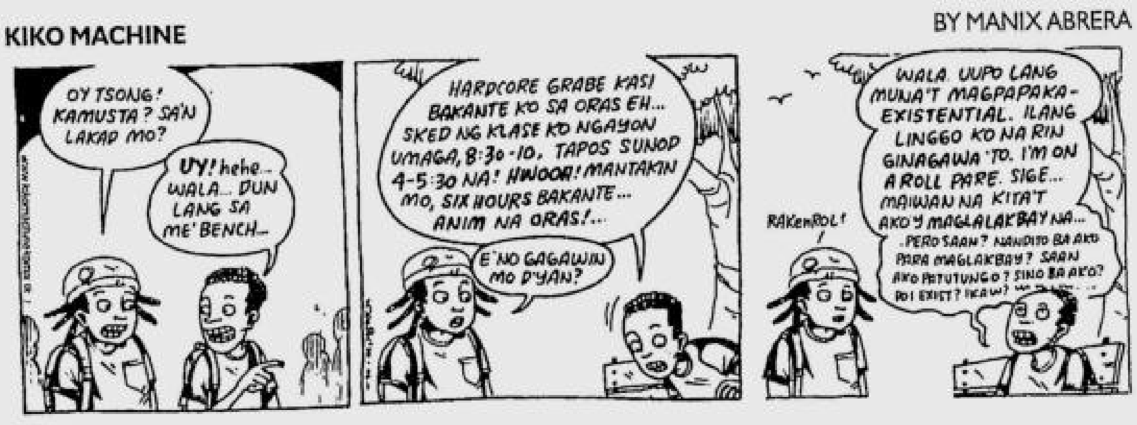
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


DARN! MISSED!
LET ME TRY A LITTLE CLOSER ...
DARN! AGAIN!
AHA GOT IT!
SEE? I TOLD YOU I COULD HIT THE TREE!

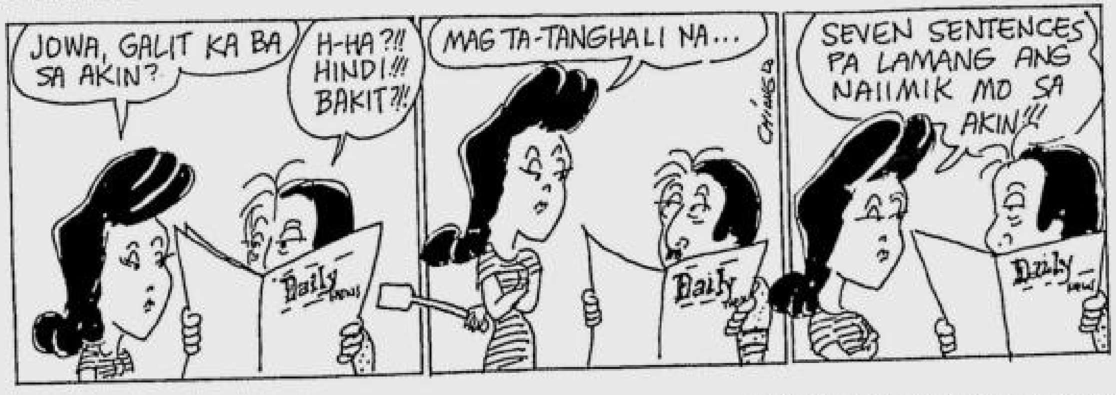
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


OY TSONG! KAMUSTA? SA'N LAKAD MO?
UY! hehe.. WALA... DUN LANG SA ME' BENCH...
HARDCORE GRABE KASI BAKANTE KO SA ORAS EH... SKED NG KLASE KO NGAYON UMAGA, 8:30-10, TAPOS SUNOD 4-5:30 NA! HWOOR! MANTAKIN MO, SIX HOURS BAKANTE... ANIM NA ORAS!...
E NO GAGAWIN MO D'YAN?
RAKenROL!
WALA. UUPO LANG MUNA'T MAGPAPAKA-EXISTENTIAL. ILANG LINGGO KO NA RIN GINAGAWA 'TO. I'M ON A ROLL PARE. SIGE... MAIWAN NA KITA'T AKO'Y MAGLALAKBAY NA...
..PERO SAAN? NANDITO BA AKO PARA MAGLAKBAY? SAAN AKO PATUTUNGO? SINO BA AKO? DO I EXIST? IKAW?

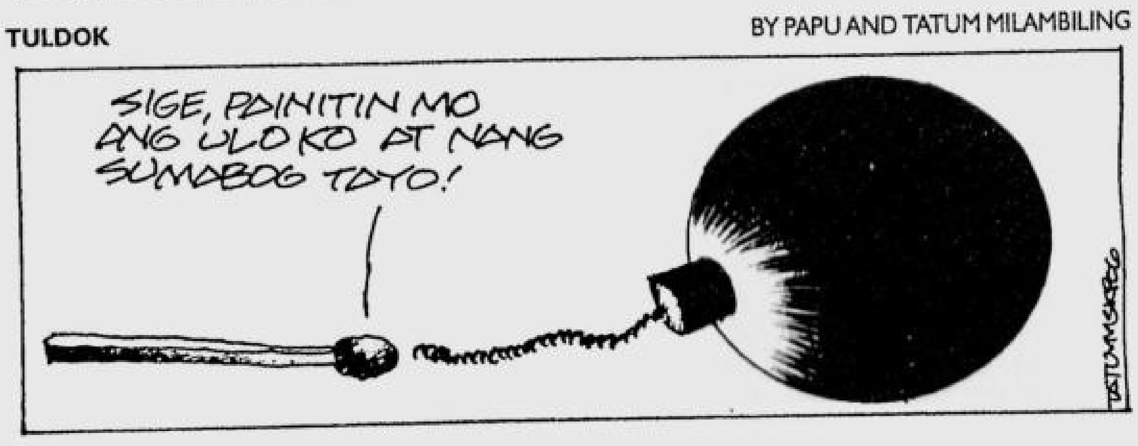
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, GALIT KA BA SA AKIN?
H-HA?!! HINDI!!! BAKIT?!!
MAG TA-TANGHALI NA...
CHIONGLO
SEVEN SENTENCES PA LAMANG ANG NAIIMIK MO SA AKIN!!
Daily News

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SIGE, PAINITIN MO ANG ULO KO AT NANG SUMABOG TAYO!
TATUM

Brand new beauty booty

ONE OF THE BEST THINGS about being in the beauty industry is the fact that fresh, new products and services are available to aficionados almost all the time.

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

This is not an attempt to completely drain what's left of your life savings, but simply to give you, faithful followers, more and more options and the chance to finally cinch those must-haves (and must-dos!) that truly work for you.

L'Oreal Professionnel X-tenso Digital Perm. You've had your fill of the rebonding trend, we're sure, and by now we bet you're pretty much ready to move on from the stiffness of stick-straight locks.

The great minds behind the anti-breakage X-tenso straightening treatment now bring us the X-tenso Digital Perm. Unlike old-school manual perms that use harsh chemicals to squeeze ringlets out of straight hair, this digital perm use the same anti-breakage X-tenso formula that protects hair during the process. The high-tech digital perm machine, on the other hand, produces calculated, precise results that look nevertheless natural.

We love how you can opt for Goldilocks ringlets or a sexy head of slight waves. That's maximum styling satisfaction with just a flick of your wrist. This service is now available at David's Salon.

DIGITAL perm

Jet Peel at the Belo Medical Group. While the famous microdermabrasion treatment, Powerpeel, will always have a loyal following, I would not be surprised if more and more Belo regulars start lining up for this brand-new facial treat.

The Jet Peel uses a liquid (read: no more major ouch!) in place of the usual crystals to exfoliate dull surface cells and smoothen blemishes.

What's more, the treatment boosts your complexion with a cocktail of vitamins infused into your skin. And because no painful pricking and extraction is involved, you can bet you can see the smooth, glowy results immediately.

Clean Fresh Laundry. Cult fave Clean Eau de Parfum has a new fragrant variant. Those who can't get enough of that famously crisp, soapy scent can add Clean Fresh Laundry to their collection, a perfect blend of florals that duplicates the smell of newly-washed fluff towels, only much, much sexier.

ModelCo. A few months ago, this brand from Australia finally found its way onto our shores and had *kikay* queens hoarding their Airbrush Moisturizer and Tan Airbrush in a Can.

After a thorough run-through of their products, I discovered a couple more reasons to believe that this new name is truly one beauty force to reckon with.

Cool Feet Airbrush Catwalk Heels is like an instant foot spa in a can. When your feet are begging for TLC, reach for this nifty spray and pamper your feet without the need for professional tools. One spray, with its deliciously minty, cooling effect, is a slice of heaven—or at least your ticket out of high-heel hell.

The famous Lash Wand poses no eyelid-pinching risk, while More Brows is a definite staple for the tweezer-happy.

Nivea. The shelves have been stocked with Nivea's easy, affordable beauty supplies, so make a run for them.

The whitening craze is on with Nivea Visage Triple White Whitening Eye Cream for hard-to-bust dark circles and discoloration that the eye area is prone to. For underarm-conscious gals, Nivea Deodorant Whitening Night Cream is bound to be an integral part of pre-bedtime rituals. Both products have taken space on my dresser. They're a breeze to use, non-sticky and smell wonderful!

To fight off the effects of sun and pollution, make Nivea Visage New Skin Intensive Rejuvenating Care part of your daily regimen. The pure Vitamin C in its formula boost your skin's natural defense against free radicals and repair earlier damage as well.

Nivea is available at all major department stores and Watson's; ModelCo. at Beauty Bar Rockwell Powerplant; Clean at Rustan's Essenses; L'oreal Digital Perm at David's Salons; Belo Medical Group at the Medical Plaza, Makati, Connecticut St., Greenhills, Tomas Morato, Rustan's Makati, Westgate Alabang and Tektite, Ortigas. For appointments and inquiries call the Belo helpdesk at 8442939.

E-mail the author at rbeauty@inquirer.com.ph

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2nd Runner Up:	Cut & Color Training in Malaysia +Php15,000 pocket money	Php15,000 TAX FREE
COVER LOOK AWARD	Php10,000 TAX FREE +Media Exposure	

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NEXT GENERATION	Php 10,000.00 tax free + Media Exposure

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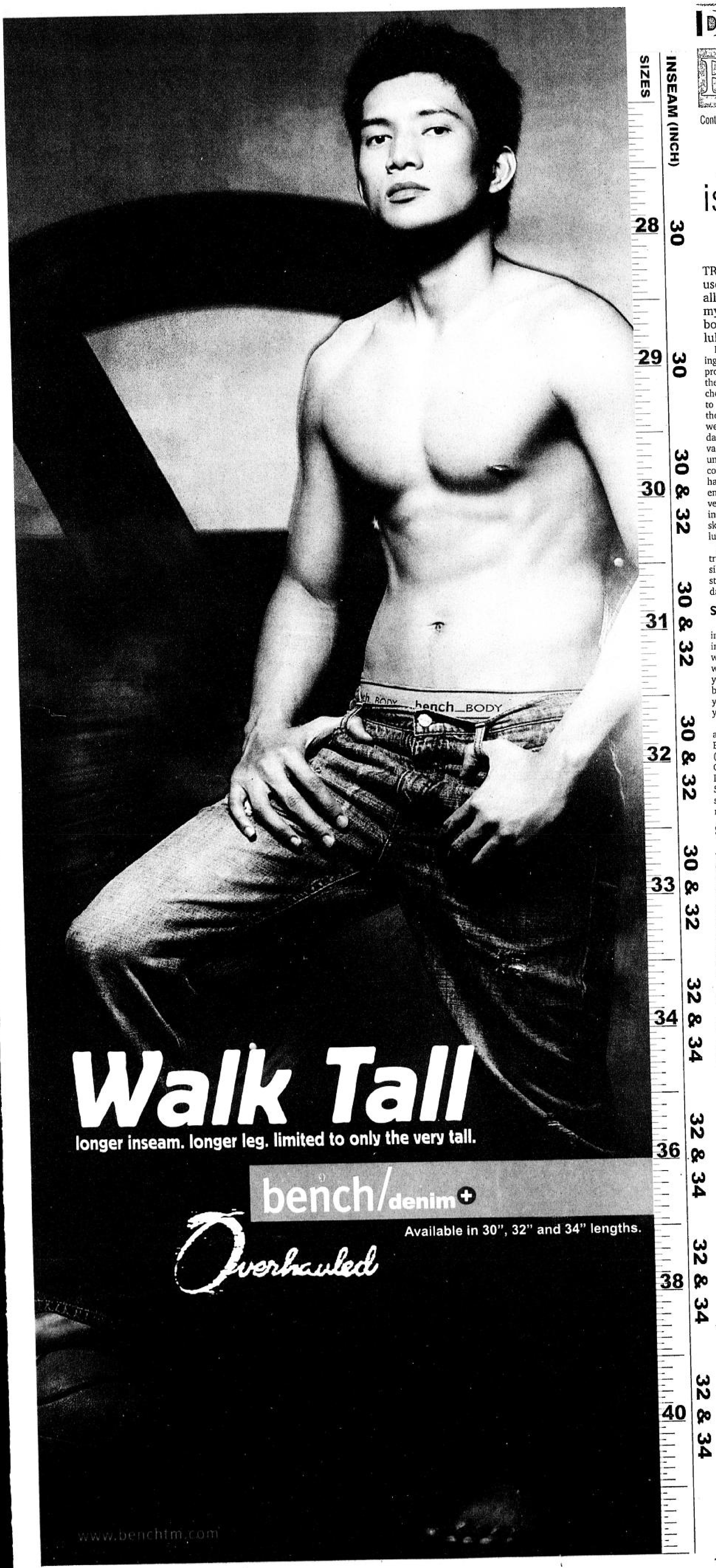

BEAUTY

Contributing editor Ria Francisco-Prieto

Aging skin is not limited to the face

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

TRULY, I AM NOT AS YOUNG AS I used to be. Before, I could devour all the unhealthy holiday treats yet my skin would stay toned and my body's defenses would beat cellulite away.

Recently, however, I have spent every waking moment road-testing treatments and products that firm up the thighs, butt and chest area. This is due to the fact that although I did not gain weight over the holidays, the sleep deprivation combined with unhealthy food and alcohol consumption has caused cellulite to emerge with a vengeance. All the toxins have caused the skin to slacken, making the appearance of cellulite a lot worse.

All the products in this column are my tried-and-tested cellulite busters and responsible for my smoother, firmer and slimmer stomach, hips, thighs and buttocks post-holidays.

Strategy A

Get rid of the water retention in the morning and use the firming, toning and fat-burning cream or serum during the evening. This will prevent these areas from accumulating water as the day progresses. Notice that you're thin in the morning, then your legs, butt and tummy usually swell, and by evening your pants are bursting and shoes are killing your feet.

Instructions: After the morning shower apply the "draining" formula like Clarins Anti Eau Oil, Ecla-Cell Draining Micro-emulsion (the newest one I tried), Afina Contouring Gel, Phytomer Body Declic Anti Cellulite/Anti Eau, Shiseido Body Creator sculpting gel. Start from ankles and work up to waist. Damp skin ensures easier spreading and is more economical in the long run.

Strategy B

Firm and tone in the evening so when you wake up the next day, your thighs are more compact and contracted. I promise you, jeans that are straight from the wash will just slide on and zip up like you are a supermodel. After washing up before going to bed, apply the firming solutions. These would be the likes of Clarins Total Lift Minceur (sold separately from Anti Eau oil), Ecla-Cell slimming and toning cream (sold together with draining emulsion), Aferligne cream, Phytomer Body Declic Contour emulsion, and Shiseido Body Creator Firming Cream.

The following can be used both day and night:

- The Apivita Metamorphosis Anti-Cellulite range with body scrub, body serum and body cream, which I should warn you is bordering on warm to hot. You will sweat buckets like you worked out in the gym and thigh circumference really gets smaller by a few centimeters. The active ingredients are metabolism- and circulation-revving red pepper, black pepper, green tea, bitter orange and ginger.
- L'Occitane Gelee Minceur shaping gel is what I use when I want instant results. I apply the gel on my thighs and buttocks and rub it down with the skin toner/massager, also by L'Occitane. It seems to break down the cellulite and make skin look smoother and contract.
- Kose Junkisui—a 3-in-1 fat-burning, anti-cellulite, and skin-whitening formula. The brand also has a detoxifying and whitening shower cream.
- Avon Cellu Sculpt—a classic favorite.

For those who want to commit to a serious anti-cellulite elimination program, Murad has the Firm and Tone Dietary Supplement pack (tablets) to battle cellulite and stretch marks. It can be partnered with the Firm and Tone Serum for cellulite and stretch-mark management, an eight-week program which requires serious commitment.

This is the next best thing to doctor's treatments if done correctly. The serum is reported to improve skin's overall look by 94 percent via reducing appearance of cellulite by 77 percent, and increasing skin's firmness and elasticity while masking imperfections.

The supplements show the following results after eight weeks: 47 percent improvement in stretch-mark appearance and 78 percent for skin firmness based on appearance alone. Do not panic if the cellulite-ridden areas puff up during the first and second weeks. The puffing will subside after that and the skin will contract, firm and smoothen out.

For inquiries on Ecla Cell, call 6888062; on Aferligne and Afina, 8442939. Apivita, Kose Junkisui, Murad and L'Occitane are exclusively available at Rustan's Essenses. Clarins and Phytomer are exclusively available at Rustan's Department Store.